

01541

1975/03/17

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NIID 009031
By SOM NARA DRS 8/11/00

SECRET NODIS CHEROKEE

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: GOE SIDE:

President Sadat
Foreign Minister Fahmy
General Gamasy

US SIDE:

Secretary Kissinger
Under Secretary Sisco
Ambassador Eilts

SUBJECT: Meeting between President Sadat and
Secretary Kissinger

PLACE: ASWAN, EGYPT

DATE: March 17, 1975

SYRIA

The Secretary first reported on his meetings in Syria. They, he recounted, had been less strained than last time. President Sadat called this "remarkable." The Secretary related that Asad had initially sought to obtain the same points as before. He, the Secretary, had explained why this was impossible at the present time. A simultaneous agreement would get no one anything. He needed time.

The talks in Syria had been in two stages, one with Asad and the entire group and the second with Asad alone. In those meetings, they agreed that Asad might be willing to accept, if not the full Disengagement Agreement, at least an interim agreement. Asad responded that he is willing to move toward peace, but that it is difficult. When meeting with Asad alone, the Secretary told the Syrian President that the Golan problem is different from that of Sinai. Intellectually, there are two kinds of solutions: one that is local and limited and excludes the settlements; the other that includes them. The latter would unquestionably be traumatic for the Israelis. It means they would in effect be agreeing to give up the Golan. Asad said that without knowing the

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NIUV 009031

By SJM NARA Date 8/11/00

SECRET NODIS CHEROKEE

2

specific facts he could not, of course, commit himself. Asad agreed with the theory, however, and expressed readiness to talk within that framework.

The Secretary said he explained to Asad that so far as an Egyptian-Israeli agreement is concerned, Israel is asking for political things which Egypt cannot give, while Sadat is asking for military things which the Israelis cannot give. Asad said this shows that, had they moved simultaneously, he, Asad, could have led the way in some political matters. Sadat observed that, to the contrary, Asad would have blocked it.

The Secretary continued that Asad is agreeable to talks. However, Asad wants an exact schedule, which the Secretary cannot give him. Asad finally agreed that if the Secretary comes one more time on this trip, this would be acceptable. Thereafter, Asad began "auctioneering," i.e. the Secretary should come back two weeks later to complete the agreement. The Secretary had pointed out that he could not do so.

The following day, Primin Haydar -- in Khaddam's absence in Cuba -- spoke with Ambassador Murphy to say that if an agreement is concluded fairly quickly, the Syrians will not cause any great difficulty for Egypt. A direct peace with Israel is not possible for Syria for 10 or 15 years, but a pragmatic step-by-step approach is possible. For that, the Syrians need the US and want good relations with the US. Although Ambassador Murphy earlier felt that the Syrians might go to war after the last meeting, they were much calmer this time. The President noted this is very "encouraging." The Secretary said that, in the presence of others, Asad had made a commitment to him toward peace. Negotiations are possible, but they cannot be called disengagement talks.

JORDAN

Speaking of his visit to Jordan, the Secretary noted that Vinogradov had just been there to urge the Jordanians to go to Geneva. Hussein reminded the Soviet diplomat that Jordan is bound by the Rabat decisions. Vinogradov said the Soviet Union is not, only by the UN Resolutions. If Jordan comes to Geneva, it can negotiate for the West Bank.

SECRET NODIS CHEROKEE

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NIIV 009031
By SJM NARA ONE 8/11/00

SECRET NODIS CHEROKEE

3

The Secretary noted his assumption that Zaid Rifai will report everything to the Syrians. The President agreed. The Secretary had asked the King's advice on how to proceed. Hussein indicated that it is important for Sadat and all of us that negotiations proceed and a separate agreement be reached.

EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI TALKS

Alluding to his talks in Israel, the Secretary said he first wished to outline the situation there. In the Secretary's view, Rabin genuinely wants an agreement and peace. For the first time, the Secretary said, he could see how peace might be made between the Israelis and the Arabs and even on the basis of the 1967 frontiers. This would, of course, take some time. In Israel, Rabin's popularity is down to 30 percent, which is a political liability.

Allon is also for peace, but more inclined to proceed in interim stages. His popularity rating is also down.

Peres' popularity has increased to 70 percent. He is a threat to Rabin and Allon and is playing tactically to become Prime Minister. He has the least understanding. While clever, he does not see the strategic picture. So far as Gur is concerned, the Chief of Staff is not worried about the Syrians, but only about Gamasy.

All of these Israeli leaders have nailed themselves into positions. Rabin and Allon have said in the Knesset that they must obtain non-belligerency as the price of evacuation and Peres has done the same. The Israeli Cabinet is undistinguished. There are massive domestic problems.

Rabin, in the Secretary's view, is looking for a way to conclude an agreement and at the same time give himself some prestige. The Israelis construe concrete ideas as pressure. Within one hour after his arrival, they had put out a negative statement. The Secretary then met with the press and publicly expressed surprise since the Israelis had said no such thing to him. There had been long meetings on Friday, Sunday night and Monday morning with the Israeli negotiating team.

SECRET NODIS CHEROKEE

DECLASSIFIED

Authority NWV 009031
By SOM NARA DWS 8/11/00

SECRET NODIS CHEROKEE

4

The basic problem, the Secretary continued, is two-fold: a) if the Israelis withdraw, they believe Sinai should be demilitarized. Therefore, Gamasy's ideas are a problem not only in the longer, but also in the shorter term; and b) everything proposed thus far leads to concrete results for Egypt. They attach importance to having at least a paper with some benefits for them. Rabin, in the Secretary's view, is ahead of his negotiating team; the team is ahead of the Cabinet. The Cabinet has never authorized any territorial offer other than that of last December. The negotiating team appears to accept evacuating the passes and the oilfields, but as a buffer zone. Rabin is beginning to accept some of Gamasy's ideas.

The negotiating team -- not the Cabinet -- agreed to two propositions on the military side: First, the Egyptian line can move forward, thus far only to the present Israeli line. The Secretary gave his personal impression that it can probably be moved somewhat farther forward. Second, some redistribution of Egyptian forces can take place, though details were not discussed. Rabin seemed agreeable to having the line go to somewhere in the present Israeli zone as well as having additional Egyptian deployment in the Egyptian zone. Conceptually, this is a big move for them.

They knew that a non-belligerency statement cannot be given. However, some statement that they can use that carries some of the same implications is wanted. The Secretary had discussed the Egyptian formula of not resorting to the use of force. President Sadat reiterated his agreement to a statement about refraining from the use of force.

The Secretary then showed the President the formulations that the Israelis had provided. He noted that if we can meet their concerns, this would probably mean rapid progress. He also referred to the President's earlier public statement that force cannot settle the Arab-Israeli dispute and thought something along these lines might help.

The essential elements, the Secretary recapped, are: a) signing is a step in the process of peace and b) elaboration of the non-resort to force concept the way it is in the Disengagement Agreement; c) they agree that it should be superseded by another agreement and are willing to put these into the peace process language; d) they are

SECRET NODIS CHEROKEE

SECRET NODIS CHEROKEE

5

still hung up on the UNEF duration. They agree it should be extended annually, but are concerned that the Egyptians will collude with the Soviets to arrange to veto it. If so, they would be disadvantaged. The Secretary also noted that they will doubtless have all kinds of points when we negotiate the details.

President Sadat asked if they had given any concrete proposals? The Secretary noted that they had given their version of a non-belligerency statement. On the duration, they agreed that it be in force until superseded by another agreement. They also want peace and agree that this is not a peace agreement, but a significant step and they want some statement that conflicts will not be solved by military force. Duration, UNEF and non-belligerency statements, the Secretary stressed, are the three essential elements. If they are solved, the military side will find rapid solutions.

President Sadat read the Israeli formulations and obviously did not like them. Sisco pointed out that the language in the second Israeli draft eliminated any reference to belligerency. The Secretary noted this is another version of their non-belligerency idea. President Sadat observed that they had dropped some of the phrases from the first draft. The first draft, he thought, was absurd; the second, he first said, "maybe."

Fahmy intervened to say the second draft is more than non-belligerency. Its emphasis is on creating relations between Egypt and Israel. This emphasis is in fact in both papers. He pointed out seven items in the second Israeli draft which, in his view, means more than non-belligerency. They mean a peace treaty.

The Secretary said that the Israelis believe they have stated less.

Fahmy asked what is the implication of all "war-like acts." President Sadat echoed the theme that the Israeli paper is more than non-belligerency.

The Secretary said he did not give them the specific language which President Sadat earlier had given him. The Israelis would simply give it to the press and complicate matters. Instead, he had described it. They had not given them a formal statement.

SECRET NODIS CHEROKEE

After some moments of reflection and in view of the President's obvious unhappiness, the Secretary said that we have reached a point where the only practical way to advance is if the President provides a maximum statement for him to take back to see what they would say. The President agreed. On the basis of their reaction, we can then agree to continue or to stop. The Secretary said if they have some qualifications, the President might wish to consider them.

The Secretary recalled the statement he had taken down during an earlier private meeting with the President. If something like that could be combined with some of the Israeli ideas, this could help.

The President indicated his understanding that there are two main points of difference: First, the non-resort to war; Second, the duration and UNEF.

The Secretary cautioned that when we get to military details, there will be "auctioneering." The Israelis have not given them any firm lines. In his view, the stronger the statement, the easier the military lines will be.

The President also understood that the Israelis have agreed that the Egyptian forces might move to a point near the Israeli lines. The Secretary replied in the affirmative and said they have agreed to some deployment of forces, but have not supplied details. He had indicated the line should be moved closer to the passes.

The President asked who will be at the eastern end of the passes? The Secretary responded that the closer the Egyptians are to the western end, the closer the Israelis will want to be to the eastern entrance. The President asked if this is on a reciprocal basis or whether the Israelis will give the UN more area on the east. The Secretary responded that he had as yet not asked the Israelis to draw a line.

His understanding is that they want the major part of the passes in UN hands. They would probably be at the eastern entrance, but this would depend on whether the Egyptian forces were.

SECRET NODIS CHEROKEE

7.

The President observed that this could mean that if the Egyptians move to the Israeli line, they may ask for their line at the eastern end. The Secretary recalled that the President had last time agreed that if the Egyptian forces are permitted to the western entrance, he would have no objection if the Israelis are on the eastern entrance. President Sadat called this Gamasy's proposal and indicated it was agreeable only as a last resort. The Secretary said they had not yet gone that far. They are still tying everything to the belligerency idea. They do not think conceptually. The idea that the Egyptian lines should move forward is a new one to them. They accept this in principle, but in the first attempt have only agreed to Egyptian forward movement as far as the UN line is.

President Sadat, who was visibly disturbed by this, said the Israelis should be under no illusions that they will remain in the passes. Their remaining in the eastern end will be only as a last resort. He would prefer that they have the area of limited forces east of the passes and give the UN some area.

BOYCOTT

Fahmy recalled that the President had agreed that there would be a selective lifting of the boycott. This would begin with Ford and then perhaps later Coca-Cola and/or Zerox. However, this could not be given in writing even to the US. It could only be oral.

The Secretary and the President then met privately for about 20 minutes. Thereafter, it was agreed that the two sides would meet again on Tuesday, March 18, prior to the Secretary's departure later that same day.

AMB:HFrEilts:ajc - 3/18/75

SECRET NODIS CHEROKEE