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By SOM NARA DATE 8/11/80

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: GOE SIDE:

 President Sadat
 Foreign Minister Fahmy
 General Gamasy

 US SIDE:

 Secretary Kissinger
 Under Secretary Sisco
 Ambassador Eilts

SUBJECT: Meeting with President Sadat,
 March 13, 1975.

PLACE: Aswan, Egypt

After welcoming the Secretary, the President indicated that he, Fahmy and Gamasy had been working all morning. Alluding to a former British official adept at developing alternative formulations, the President noted that Fahmy had prepared two formulas. He described the first as a compromise; the second as a final fallback position.

The Secretary indicated that if there is anything in the first formula, he would begin with that. If this is not possible, he would utilize the second. The President noted the two formulas differ only in Article III. Fahmy claimed he used the Secretary's own wording in his formulations. The Preamble, he noted, is to give the impression that more than a Disengagement Agreement is involved. Point No. 2, having to do with new lines, will not be in the agreement, but in an annex. The Secretary said these formulations would not be the agreement, but simply points. Both Sadat and Fahmy agreed.

The Secretary said he wished to make a few observations regarding the likely Israeli reaction. He would do so first in terms of the contents of the paper and second in terms of omission or points to be explained.

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a) On point 1, having to do with the area of withdrawal, The Secretary thought it might be possible, although the phraseology might have to be different. The subject will probably have to be phrased in terms of mutuality. Fahmy observed that the first point is a position.

b) On point 2, the Secretary noted that the first sub-paragraph (a) is what we are talking about. Re sub-paragraph (b), he asked what the Egyptian side means by the western end of the passes? If this is intended to be taken literally, he thought it was unobtainable and certainly not unless Israel is at the eastern end of the passes.

Sub-para (c) is in principle all right. (See qualification below.)

On sub-para (d), the Secretary speculated Egyptian absorption of the UN zone might be attainable, but Israel will have trouble accepting this. Sadat inquired if this would still be true if the forces are exactly the same on the western end of the passes. General Gamasy thought Egypt should be at the western entrances. The Secretary asked if Sadat wished the Israelis out of the eastern end?

Gamasy indicated his preference that the western entrance be held by Egypt even if the Israelis hold the eastern entrance rather than giving it to the UN. The Secretary opined this will be a totally new thought to the Israelis. The Israeli idea, still without Cabinet approval, continues to be a 30-50 kilometer withdrawal with all the areas evacuated under the UN. He doubted they have yet addressed themselves to a significant forward movement of the Egyptian line.

Sub-para (d) they would accept, but if sub-para (c) means the zone of unlimited armaments is across the Canal, this will create monumental difficulties. The President noted if Egypt opens the Canal, it will be hard to close it. The entire Egyptian military posture is defensive.

The Secretary pointed out that the Israelis have been briefing the press about Egypt's now having an offensive capability.

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(f) On point No. 3, having to do with formal assurances, the Secretary said he does not know which of the two formulations they would be likely to prefer. The Israelis will contend that the prohibition against introducing military and para-military forces is already in the last Disengagement Agreement. In that agreement, it is applicable to both sides. Now it would appear that only one side is being asked to do so. Fahmy observed that Egypt would be willing to put it into a Disengagement Agreement. The Secretary speculated on likely arguments which will be made by those who want the agreement. There is a subtle distinction between resort to the use of force and military and para-military operations, but what is it?

Sadat commented that in the future, we should not resort to the use of force. There eventually may be non-belligerency. The Secretary agreed, but noted that for the duration of the Agreement, something less will be required. The Israelis will say that as long as the process of moving toward a just and durable peace continues, it is agreeable. However, they will also want to know what will happen in the event they do not agree with Arab proposals at Geneva. Will force prohibitions then be ended?

Digressing, the President raised the matter of the Palestinians. The Secretary said he was convinced that to introduce the matter of the Palestinians will simply produce a prolonged stalemate. He would have to explain some of the language tomorrow. The certain Israeli reaction will be one of doubt that they can put these proposals to the Knesset.

With respect to point 4, having to do with Syria, the Secretary thought the Israelis will refuse, and especially so if there is harassment on the Syrian front. He opined that the term "attack" is better than the existing language. Fahmy stated that this is what is meant by preemptive war.

Point 5, having to do with the right of self-defense, the Secretary opined is agreeable. The same holds true with Point 6, though this should be done between and among the Arabs themselves. Re Syria, the Secretary thought we might say our efforts will be exerted to get a negotiation begun before the middle of 1975.

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On point 7, concerning the duration of UNEF, the Secretary expressed concern about the clause, "as long as efforts for a just and lasting settlement are proceeding." This, the Israelis will view as an escape clause. The Secretary noted we have two problems with this article. First, we are dealing with a group of 6 or 7, which must carry the Cabinet of 25 and then the Knesset of 100. Second, they are not statesmen. The Secretary noted the concept of "annual renewal" seems to mean that one can get them out. Something about refraining from resort to force is also necessary. In practice, it is meaningless. The Israelis, he acknowledged, would like to give the agreement some permanence. Fahmy contended this would be political suicide.

The Secretary expressed understanding that if there is no movement, there will again be war. He observed that he is aware of the President's problem. Sadat noted what the Israelis want is that anything not resolved will not be handled through military action. The Secretary agreed.

Point 8, having to do with cooperation with UNEF commander, the Secretary noted, will be acceptable, but will have to be in more institutionalized form. The Israelis will want some kind of commission or committee.

Point 9, spelling out no destruction of roads or properties, should pose no problems.

On point 10, the Secretary noted two weeks for the relinquishment of the Abu Rodeis oilfields is too short. It should be a little longer. Three months is too long.

Point 11 on the Geneva conference poses no problem.

Point 12, the Secretary noted, is impossible. While conceding it to be a mild formulation, he thought this will have to be taken out. He noted if the Israelis leak this to the press it will mean trouble. In the US, the Palestinians are regarded as murderers. We must start the process of rehabilitation of the Palestinians. If Israel can get the Arab-Israeli issue focussed on the problem of the Palestinians, it has succeeded. Fahmy said he had an idea how to solve the matter based on the Secretary's comments, but did not specify.

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Fahmy said that, judging from the Secretary's comments, the sides may be far apart on an agreement. There are several basic points on which Egypt cannot give way to Israel, viz

(a) the passes and the oil fields. There should be progress not only from the Egyptian point of view, but also in the Arab world. No one will believe Egypt achieved anything if only the Israelis withdraw.

(b) a second problem is political. Egypt cannot agree to language which gives public expression to the fact that it is an interim political solution. The Secretary thought this could be avoided. The Israelis could probably agree to phraseology along the lines of a "continuance of the process of peace." As to the second formula, they would like to present it to their public that henceforth disputes will be settled by peaceful means and that after the conclusion of an agreement, the danger of war has decreased. The President indicated agreement in principle.

(c) Fahmy noted that only remaining problem was that of linkage. The Secretary suggested that any reference to the Palestinians be dropped. Fahmy agreed to drop it from the agreement, but contended it should still be discussed. A letter from the US on the subject would be helpful. The Secretary observed this would be dangerous to him. Fahmy proposed language similar to that used by President Nixon with Brezhnev and by President Ford at Vladivostok. The Secretary said we can give an oral assurance. We would have had political contact with the Palestinians in November had it not been for Rabat.

The Secretary asked if his understanding is correct that Egypt wants a commitment in the agreement to continue the process of peace. The President agreed. The Secretary again alluded to the related point that settlement of disputes would be through peaceful means. The President again agreed. A third problem, the Secretary continued, is to prevent the process of peace from becoming an excuse to abrogate the agreement. The Israelis are likely to interpret all phrases the way they want. If worded positively, however, this should be agreeable. Fahmy asked what would happen if nothing

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transpires. The process of peace must continue, but why should they constantly assume Egyptian mischievousness and what is wrong with Geneva.

The Secretary responded that the Israelis state that Sadat tricked them once and he can do it again. This might not be so, but the Israelis believe it. The Israelis are afraid that Egypt will engage in another Yom Kippur War, and need something for their public opinion. Israel, Egypt and the US, the Secretary continued, need an agreement. The costs of no agreement are out of proportion. He noted that the President had described the Israeli terms as more moderate than anticipated.

Sadat observed that earlier in the morning, when meeting with Fahmy and Gamasy, he had expressed a desire to make the agreement a turning point toward peace. He recognized that the Israelis are confused and do not know where they are heading. He would open the door for the Israelis.

The Secretary thought he should give the Israelis the ideas in the President's paper but not the paper itself. We could then take their views and prepare an American proposal.

The Secretary asked how the Israelis might be answered if they query in what way the present ideas differ from the earlier Fahmy paper. The President and Fahmy noted it is a step forward. On basic issues, the President said he was still confused. Would they give up to Egypt the passes? If the Israelis believe that Egypt would forego the passes, there is no agreement. The Soviets and Syrians will say what did Egypt get? It is not just a case of withdrawal but of regaining some territory. If they think only they are to move and turn over the territory to the UN, this is nothing. When the Secretary suggested Egyptian civilian administrators, Fahmy said this means nothing.

The Secretary thought if the Israelis were on the eastern end of the passes and Egypt on the west, this might just be possible. The President agreed. So did Fahmy, who said this could be sold to the Egyptian people. The Secretary reiterated that the Israelis are not really

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focussing on this. They are not thinking of the balance of forces in the Sinai. Gamasy thought this means that the Israelis will want to keep their troops in the western entrances. The President said he had not discussed this. On the West Bank, the forces should be larger than under the first Disengagement Agreement. He was thinking about reopening the Suez Canal and Egypt's obligation to protect it. The Canal, he noted, is a serious barrier to a pre-emptive war.

The Secretary noted the Israeli obsession with an Egyptian attack. He conceded that it is conceivable that Egypt would do so. However, Israel has talked itself into a frame of mind where it feels threatened. He recalled that the Israelis asked for some sign from the President to rebuild the Suez area as a sign of his peaceful intent. The Israelis want it both ways. Fahmy added that Egypt cannot present any agreement as an interim agreement. To do so would be harmful to Egypt.

The Secretary wondered if some way could be found to express the two points:

- a) The agreement is not final, and that the process for peace must continue, and
- b) both parties pledge they will seek to settle their disputes by peaceful means. The President agreed. Fahmy thought such language should be in connection with UNSC Resolution 338.

The Secretary reiterated he will not present the paper, but only the ideas. Some decision is needed in Israel to agree to some lines. There are four positive Egyptian points:

- a) This is not a final step toward peace.
- b) All disputes will be settled by peaceful means.
- c) To refrain from resort to use of force.
- d) Annual renewal of UNEF.

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On its side, Egypt wants a) a forward movement of the Egyptian line (Gamasy interjected that this is very important), and b) how the balance of forces is defined after the lines move forward.

Fahmy asked how the Israelis expected 7,000 soldiers in so large an area. The Secretary asked why not. Gamasy contended that the Israeli military position is better if they are on the other side of the passes. The Secretary said the Israelis will not see it this way. Having a mountain in back of them gives them great psychological assurances.

Asked about the other points which the Secretary had mentioned yesterday, the President said they had tried to put these into the paper. The Secretary asked if this means anything not now in the paper was unacceptable. He reiterated several of the points:

- a) Families should be allowed to visit in the Sinai. Sadat agreed. This should apply to Egyptians and Palestinians in Gaza.
- b) Travelers may use the same passport going to Israel and to Egypt. The President agreed.
- c) Controlling progaganda. The President noted that nothing can be done about the Voice of Palestine. As far as Radio Cairo is concerned, this should be no problem. In any case, nothing of this sort can be put into an agreement.
- d) Arab diplomatic pressures against Israel. Sadat said nothing could be done on this score.
- e) Freedom of navigation through the Bab-el-Mandab.
- f) Transit of Israelis through the Canal. The President noted cargo only, not crews. Fahmy noted people will kill the Israelis aboard the ships. The President observed if there are one or two Israelis aboard the ship, this will be all right, but not many. Fahmy thought they would make a test case out of it.
- g) Arab restrictions and economic boycott. Sadat said this can begin on a selective basis. Fahmy

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noted the President had the previous day ordered a change of the Egyptian representative on the boycott commission. The new man has a new spirit and new instructions.

h) Mixed Committee. Fahmy thought this was covered by his point 8. The Secretary noted that Egypt and Israel would set up a committee to assist the UN commander. Fahmy said it is not clear what is wanted. The Secretary noted it will help to have the commission or committee consist of Egyptian and Israeli officers to assist the UN commander. The President thought it was dangerous to have Israelis in the UN area. In principle, he agreed, but a formula had to be found.

i) Reconnaissance flights. The President turned this down. If the US provides Egypt with the same equipment as it does to the Israelis, then it will be all right. The Secretary said our aircraft have been flying farther out in international waters. Sadat noted this is not the case with the Israeli planes which fly reconnaissance flights every day.

j) Agreement in force until superseded by a new agreement. The President agreed in principle, but wanted better phraseology developed.

After a five-minute recess and meeting of the American side, the Secretary said he again wished to sum up as follows:

We must get the Israeli Cabinet to agree this Sunday on principles. We will meet with the Israeli negotiating team Friday. Sadat thought that perhaps Mrs. Meir might help. The Secretary said he would not present the paper since this will confuse the drafting process with the conceptual process.

On the positive side, he would say President Sadat is ready to agree to:

a) A statement that this is not a final peace settlement, but a step in the process leading to peace according to UN resolutions;

b) In the peace process, solutions to disputes will be found by peaceful means;

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- c) some reference not to resort to force;
- d) as long as we make it clear that this is not the final agreement, something along the lines, "This agreement is valid until superseded by a new agreement."
- e) Mixed commissions.
- f) Annual renewal.
- g) the various items on the list.

On the Egyptian side, they want:

- a) some balanced disposition of forces;
- b) the various technical points, e.g. the non-destruction of property, roads, etc.

The Syrian and Palestinian points will have to be handled separately. The President said he would like to mention Syria in the agreement in some way. The Secretary expressed the view that the Israelis are not planning a preemptive attack. However, in the event of a war of attrition or Palestinian raids, they want the opportunity to retaliate. Some formula will have to be found for this. The Israelis are afraid of Egypt and not Syria.

At the end of the meeting, Gamasy told the Secretary that he hopes Egypt will be supported on the military side. Failure to do this could complicate matters. Subsequently, while waiting outside, Gamasy told Ambassador Eilts that if military arrangements are not acceptable, there will be no agreement. He would see to that. (The General did not speak threateningly, but almost resignedly.) Gamasy added that, in his view, it would be better to make a try for the Arish-Ras Mohamed line and in that context try to settle some of the broader issues.

AMB:HFrEilts:ajc - 3/13/75

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