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 Authority NND 009029
 By JB NARA Date 8-2

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
 WASHINGTON

Chapter 13 #3

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CLASSIFIED BY Henny H. Kissinger
 EXEMPT FROM GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION
 SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652
 EXEMPTION CATEGORY 5b (1,3)
 AUTOMATICALLY DECLASSIFIED ON Imp to Det

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State
 Joseph Sisco, Assistant Secretary for
 Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs
 Peter W. Rodman, NSC Staff

Golda Meir, Prime Minister of Israel
 Simcha Dinitz, Ambassador to the U. S.
 Mordechai Gazit, Director of the Prime
 Minister's Office
 General Aharon Yariv, Assistant to the
 Prime Minister
 Mordechai Shalev, Minister
 General Yisrael Leor, Adviser to the
 Prime Minister

TIME AND DATE:

Saturday, November 3, 1973
 10:45 p.m. - 1:10 a.m.

PLACE:

The Blair House
 Washington

Kissinger: I hope you won't take the decision by a majority vote.

Dinitz: We don't know how all our people will vote!

Meir: It will be done in a very democratic manner.

We once had somebody in Italy handling the immigration into Israel. He was very strong-minded and independent. He wouldn't follow guidance. Someone asked him, "Don't you consult anybody?" He said, "Yes -- Mordechai [a colleague who had just died]. And he always agrees with me." [laughter]

What progress have we made?

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Kissinger: We have two problems -- we have to discuss what proposals we will make for the immedaite situation, and second, what we do if it's rejected. Then we should discuss what happens afterwards; because it will give us a new decision. And you have to remember that for ten days I'm not easily accessible.

Meir: I almost said, "That's fine." [laughter]

Kissinger: I've offered your Ambassador alternative access.

Meir: Can I tell you what my colleagues' unanimous opinion is?

Kissinger: Please.

Meir: [takes out cable] First, I think they should be asked, in reciprocity of course, to observe the ceasefire. Do you know what they tried to do today?

Kissinger: No.

Meir: They tried to build a bridge across the Canal.

Kissinger: Building a bridge is not necessarily a violation.

Meir: Well, they should stay where they are. Breaking out is.

Kissinger: Breaking out is, certainly.

Meir: We had to knock it out.

[Coffee is served.]

Meir: When are you leaving?

Kissinger: Monday morning. But I'll be reachable. I'll be in Cairo Tuesday evening, but won't do any work there, I don't think, until Wednesday morning.

Meir: Do you always work at night?

Kissinger: Usually.

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Meir: [reads from cable]: We agree to a system of non-military supplies to the Third Army under joint UN-Israeli supervision and inspection. So. The town of Suez was brought up in a meeting today between one of our generals and theirs. The town will receive food, medical supplies, and water, and the details can be worked out between the two sides. We would expect immediately, since supply will be constant, that all wounded Israeli POWs, and wounded Egyptians in the Third Army, and wounded civilians in the town will be exchanged immediately. The Bab El-Mandeb blockade will be lifted -- concurrently with the supply. The question of the October 22 lines will be discussed between the two sides in the framework of disengagement and separation of forces.

Kissinger: What does that mean?

Meir: It means the generals will touch on it, talk about it.

Kissinger: But if you propose an exchange of armies, what's the significance of the October 22 lines?

Meir: Right. It has none.

Then, assuming the above is agreed between the U.S. and Israel, if a Security Council resolution is introduced which opens the way to Soviet intervention, the U.S. will veto it.

Here you have an exchange of the wounded, a lifting of the blockade, plus a discussion of the October 22 lines. Today we haven't received one single wounded or a list; they said, "There are political difficulties."

Kissinger: They tell me you refused an exchange of wounded. They said you linked it to two other conditions.

Meir: Which?

Sisco: We're told there was an understanding on all the details but then at the end your man said, "We can't exchange wounded until you give us a list of all POWs."

Yariv: This is correct. It was part of the agreement we reached with them.

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Kissinger: You and we are living in a different world. Suppose we make this proposal and they reject it, what's the next move? You will allow no convoys?

Meir: No convoys.

Kissinger: Then if the Soviets fly in helicopters? You shoot them down?

Meir: Maybe.

Kissinger: And if they put in the Soviet Air Force, you'll fight the Soviet Air Force?

Meir: Does this mean that whatever the Egyptians propose we have to accept

Kissinger: No, but in the context of something reasonable we can do something. Basically you're saying you're willing to let supplies in through Israeli checkpoints in exchange for lifting the blockade and an exchange of POWs. They'll certainly reject it. In effect you're refusing even to discuss the October 22 lines.

You'll say this Monday?

Yariv: He already knows it.

Kissinger: So you'll say this Monday?

Yariv: Probably there will be no meeting until Tuesday.

Kissinger: And I'll say it again Wednesday?

Yariv: We can coordinate what I say Tuesday so that you can say more on Wednesday.

Kissinger: You propose, after a week's discussion, to tell him what you've already told him. After we've told him to come to us because we can get progress. He'll have no choice but to go to the Russians. I know what the President will do.

Dinitz: There are two new elements in it. One is that the supplies are on a permanent basis, and there is joint inspection.

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Kissinger: In other words, nothing has survived since yesterday. The agreement in principle to the October 22 lines, UN inspection of the roads -- this has not survived. You have offered in effect only supplies.

Yariv: You understand their need for supplies.

Kissinger: What you underestimate is the total impossibility -- in which we won't cooperate -- of destroying the Third Army.

Meir: Why cut it off?

Kissinger: They won't accept it.

Meir: So they're destroying the Third Army.

Kissinger: I tried to explain yesterday what we had to do. There is no point in my telling them this because you're going to tell him.

Meir: Dr. Kissinger, I refuse to accept your interpretation that offering to supply the Third Army means destroying the Third Army.

Kissinger: They won't accept it.

Meir: Whatever they accept....

Kissinger: The Russians won't allow it, and we won't interfere..

Meir: You won't?

Kissinger: We won't stop the Russians. This will be the end result.

Joe, can you think of anything we can add to this discussion that we haven't already said?

Sisco: No, sir.

Meir: They promised us lists, and haven't given them to us. I think it's because Fahmi is in Washington.

Kissinger: We had a basic strategic decision, whether working together we could achieve a common process -- which is certainly not a Russian position --

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which could moderate the pressures on us and achieve the essential Israeli positions.

We could have formulated positions which we could start with, and then end with an agreed one.

I've outlined to you the combination of pressures -- oil pressures, European pressures, Japanese pressures, Soviet pressures, UN pressures, and bureaucratic pressures -- which will operate in America. You can submit your proposal. If they accept it, you're right. If not -- General Haig has explained the President's thinking. And all of it will happen in the peculiarly unfortunate situation of us all being scattered.

Meir: Suppose we start peace negotiations. What happens to us then? The Soviets won't change, the Europeans, Japanese won't change. Oil is still in Arab hands. How do you know it won't just be more pressure to do more?

Kissinger: You can't say there will never be any Israeli concessions.

Meir: We never say that.

Kissinger: No, when the vital questions are raised....

Meir: Why won't the Egyptians make concessions?

Kissinger: We're trying to get the Egyptians to make concessions.

Meir: How?

Kissinger: By getting them to agree to negotiations within a framework that we and you have devised. If you think you won't pay a huge price for disengaging totally from the United States Government.... In the UN we're forced to vote against you. You think this won't generate greater Russian pressure?

We were asked again by them to sponsor a joint resolution.

The proposal we discussed yesterday wasn't the Russian position.

Meir: What if the proposal we discussed last night is rejected?

Kissinger: It may be. We've told the Russians nothing. We've used this

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proposal to squeeze them out. We would have supported a mild repetition of 339 but which generally supported your position. Our Ambassador at the UN has generally said the position we agreed on was the U.S. position.

Meir: Do you suppose the Russian proposal would pass?

Kissinger: It makes a helluva lot of difference whether it passes without our support or with our support. We wouldn't be in a position of public opposition.

Maybe Yariv is right. We've no reason to make the Egyptians do less than they're willing to do.

Yariv: I can't be sure, but I think so.

Meir: We didn't start the war, yet....

Kissinger: Madame Prime Minister, we are faced with a very tragic situation. You didn't start the war, but you face a need for wise decisions to protect the survival of Israel. This is what you face. This is my honest judgment, as a friend.

Meir: [her voice shaking]: You're saying we have no choice.

Kissinger: We face the international situation that I described to you.

Meir: You're saying we have to accept the judgment of the U.S.

Kissinger: I think you face disaster.

Meir: We have to accept your judgment? Even on our own affairs? On what is best for us?

Kissinger: We all have to accept the judgment of other nations. We're deferring to your judgment.

I'll have to report to the President.

Meir: I'll call the Cabinet and tell them we have to accept the U.S. position or see the destruction of Israel.

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Kissinger: It won't mean the destruction of Israel.

Meir: I don't mean the U.S. will do it, but that's what will happen.

Kissinger: I'm telling you the facts. On the Saturday morning of the convoy, the dominant judgment in the U.S. government was to supply the Third Army ourselves. It was the formal position of the Defense Department. I blocked it, and there was an appeal to the President through Haig.

If I go to Cairo with your proposal, it is self-evident that I can do nothing on the oil pressure. Sure, the oil pressure is there later, too. But it makes a helluva difference if we can get through the winter. Oil pressure in April is different from oil pressure in November.

Secondly, if the Soviets threaten you over negotiating positions later, it will be different from threatening in the context of the Third Army being cut off in violation of the ceasefire. The political situation is totally different. I don't even want to imagine the chaos if there is a Soviet confrontation next week when I'm in Peking and Sisco is in Beirut. A technical chaos, but significant. It will be hard to fine-tune it in any case, with all the pressures on Scali.

We have to deliver something to the Arabs which is less than what the Soviets can deliver, and we can do it only if we can show we can deliver and they can't. That has to be the strategy.

We've tried to maneuver it in a complex way. It is not the Soviet position. We haven't even told them anything.

Brezhnev wrote a letter Tuesday proposing joint representatives. We rejected it today. We wrote a letter about SALT, and didn't even answer their letter.

Diplomatically you have not won the war. You won it tactically.

Meir: Diplomatically we will never win.

Kissinger: Exactly. That is the tragedy.

Meir: It is worse than in 1956. But that time we started it -- for good reasons. But even this time. Do you think a future Prime Minister will accept not starting, but taking the knock, and taking all those casualties? I don't know how many deaths I'm responsible for. I have to live with it.

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Kissinger: It got you total diplomatic support, the airlift, a face-down of the Soviets, and a military victory. It is not insignificant.

Meir: Dado (Elazar) is a cool-headed man, but he told me what we would suffer if we didn't preempt. He was pleading with me. Moshe was there.

I told Haig, what have we got except spirit? If we broke the confidence of our people, we can do nothing for Israel. We can't give this up.

Kissinger: What do you give up? It can't be so unreasonable; you were considering it last night.

Meir: I hope there was no misunderstanding that there was agreement last night. We listened to you; you listened to us. We had to consult our people. Our people considering this -- Eban, Allon, Galili, Sapir -- they all felt this. Eban and Allon are not exactly extremists. They're not all mad. We may have a mad Prime Minister but they are not all mad.

I have to tell our Parliament. We're a broken people after that.

Kissinger: I was under sort of the impression that you were interested last night.

Meir: What Yariv suggested last night he suggested for the first time. I heard it for the first time.

It won't be the same army anymore. It won't be the same people any more.

Not even the Soviet Union can break us. The U.S. can. Not because you intended it, but....

Kissinger: You can break yourselves by not recognizing reality.

Meir: What would you tell our Parliament?

Kissinger: I'm not responsible to the Israeli Parliament. How does it break you to accept the principle of returning to the October 22 lines which everyone in this room didn't think would happen very quickly? We're talking about a face-saving formula.

Meir: Suppose we're asked, what does this mean, "agreement in principle?"

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Kissinger: It means you accept the principle but have to negotiate it. We'll take the position that we surely don't know where it is. The second point I understand of Yariv was that the UN is on the roads but you would be guarding the terrain too.

Yariv: Our people tell us that the personal anti-tank weapons can easily be smuggled.

Meir: A lot of our boys were killed by that.

Kissinger: I'm just going over the proposal of last night, to reject the proposition that we were trying to rape you. The U.S. was trying to protect you, by developing a framework.

Sure, some weapons get through; there is some risk. But in foreign policy you have to accept the risk of the whole situation. But I totally reject the proposition that this is a U.S. -Soviet proposal.

You're also - -maybe deliberately -- upsetting the strategy of trying to move the Egyptians away from the Russians.

Meir: Why deliberately?

Kissinger: Maybe it serves your purpose.

Yariv: First, a technical point. They don't have any answer yet on the system of non-military supply. There is no compelling reason for us to say this on Tuesday. They don't know our answer. They won't have heard this. This question of continual supply is a major question for them.

When I met with him, I made clear that we rejected his plan. Phase A of Fahmi's plan was disengagement. I said we'd consider it, but asked about the 30 km. He said, "This can be discussed." I asked, "What about the character of the Third Army force?" He said, "It can be from a division to a symbolic force." I told him, we would have no answer until Monday.

Then he brought up another point, about the life of the Third Army.

So he doesn't know what position we have. There is no need for us to go. We can postpone the meeting.

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Kissinger: What do you want the U.S. to do if there is a UN Security Council resolution demanding the enforcement of 339?

Yariv: It can happen any day.

Kissinger: No, it won't come up until after I leave Cairo. It can happen anytime after then.

Yariv: I think there is reasonable chance for this proposal. From my experience with him, I think there is a helluva chance they'll accept. If they think we have your strong support. The condition of life for the Third Army is very important for them. Paragraph three of 338 talks about ongoing negotiations; we can say this is ongoing negotiations.

Kissinger: You will have a helluva time explaining to the American people how we can have constant confrontations, and an oil shortage, over the issue of your right to hold territory you took after the ceasefire.

Yariv: We're willing to give it all back.

Kissinger: I'm not without experience myself in negotiations, particularly about the big picture. It takes a peculiar lack of memory to think I've suddenly adopted a position against you. You've made your judgment. I've told you our judgment. The President, I think, will order support for a resolution to return to the October 22 lines. That's my judgment; I haven't discussed it with him.

Meir: I spoke to Haig. He said maybe minor military supplies will get through.

In the military briefing you had, our men said they were like ants. Those soldiers, bringing those missiles in. Many boys were hurt from them.

I'm not very wise, but I'm not the dumbest person I've met. I'm too old to worry about that. But I know one thing: I can face the mothers of those boys and their wives if I've done everything for them. They'll ask me, "Are you sure there are no missiles?" I won't lie. I'll say, "I'm not sure."

Kissinger: If you're right, no one will be happier than us. But if the Third Army reaches extremis, I can assure you the U.S. will support any move to support the Third Army. At that point you will have brought about continued supply to the Third Army, for nothing.

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On that Saturday you let the convoy in, you think it was American pressure. But the alternative was not no convoy, but a joint U.S. - Soviet force. What we gained was some control over your destiny.

Meir: Don't be angry with me. I believe you. If I didn't believe you, it would be easier. We wouldn't pay any attention. But objectively: When you were in Moscow, you sent us a message. Why discuss it, when it was already done in the Security Council? We called the Government -- when?

Dinitz: 10:00 p.m.

Meir: We put the transistor on the table. We are supposed to be the Cabinet of a sovereign country. We get the President's message, your message, fine. Why ask us? Just tell us. We had a choice?

Kissinger: It was agreed at 4:00, sent to Washington at 5:15, for immediate delivery. I think the Soviets jammed every frequency.

Meir: I believe you. Now you tell me there will be these consequences. The convoy, You called on Saturday. I couldn't tell you that I couldn't get the Cabinet together on Sabbath. We got together.

Kissinger: From the point of view of fairness, at every stage of the war, we did things we've never done with any other government. I asked your Ambassador how many days you needed. He said, two days, three days. Thursday night, the Soviets gave us a ceasefire proposal that was horrible. Even with modifications, it was hard to veto. I told your Ambassador right away about my trip to Moscow. I did it so it would give you another forty-eight hours.

Dinitz: Right. But one thing: You said you would have to come back afterwards to check with the President.

Kissinger: That's right. But the President, without my knowing it, wrote a letter to Brezhnev saying I had full power. Not with my permission. It was there when I got there. The first night they insisted on a meeting; I avoided substance -- I made an eloquent speech about detente. I threw in "negotiations". They accepted it. I said, "between the parties concerned." Which I thought was your maximum position. Coupled with a reference to 242, which the President had thought in June was victory. And with that letter from the President to Brezhnev....

I'm convinced the Russians jammed every frequency. I used the airplane communications, because I didn't want State Department to see my per-

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sonal appeal to you. I didn't even know about it. I took a nap, when I woke up and heard about it, I went crazy. This is what we went through.

Meir: I know. I'm telling you what it reflected at home. We wouldn't have accepted a ceasefire without prisoners.

Kissinger: On the prisoners, we have the personal word of Brezhnev. It would be done except that now it is mixed up with what looks like your violation of the ceasefire -- whoever shot first.

On the convoy, my proposal Friday was to propose the convoy and then discuss the modalities of how to put it through. You put it the other way around.

Now, for me it doesn't make a helluva difference. But you have to consider two things: (1) Can you trust us enough to adopt a tactic where you're a little tougher than we, if this gives us a split between the Egyptians and the Russians and an easing of the oil embargo? If oil is shut off because the Arabs were bastards, and we have an energy program, you've won the battle of public opinion.

Meir: Sir Alec will be different?

Kissinger: No, Sir Alec and Pompidou will never be different. They are trying to horn in on every negotiation. We have good intelligence of what they're doing. We don't tell them anything because they then go to the Arabs and promise more.

If the issue is the Arabs trying to blackmail the U.S., this is a different situation than if it looks like Israeli intransigence is the cause of the problem.

Yariv: I want to mention one other thing. Our people tell us the Russians are egging the Syrians on to reject the ceasefire.

Kissinger: Yes. The Russians have an interest in the Arabs never getting anything settled through us. The Russians are furious that we're not consulting them. They'll be delighted if I leave Cairo with nothing.

Meir: On Syria, our people say there can be the return of all the civilians, but it has to be something simultaneous -- an exchange of prisoners -- but the two posts on Mr. Germon we took afterward can be under UN supervision.

Kissinger: On that one you're under no pressure from us.

Let me sum up your position. You'll return the dead bodies. You permit convoys to return. You'll evacuate the two posts and turn them over to the UN. And they will return all prisoners.

Is this acceptable to you if it goes in two stages?

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Meir: No, we don't believe the Syrians.

Kissinger: Madame Prime Minister, my experience is to put it in the framework of what they've proposed. -- the lists exchanged when civilians are returned, and prisoners exchanged only when the posts are returned.

Dinitz: We're afraid they'll stop after the lists.

Kissinger: That's reasonable. But you run the risk of not getting the prisoners back.

Meir: Why?

Kissinger: There would be no lists.

Meir: We must get the lists first, and then let the Red Cross see them.

Kissinger: Immediately have an exchange of lists, followed immediately by a package deal.

Meir: And the Red Cross must see them.

Kissinger: All right. We'll transmit it. There is no need for us to quarrel; I just want to know what your position is.

Meir: You know we once got prisoners back who had to go immediately to an insane asylum?

Kissinger: Because they were tortured?

Meir: Yes.

Yariv: I'll get the pictures and show you. [He then goes out.]

Meir: Maybe the civilians mean a lot to them. Maybe it will help with the Egyptians.

Kissinger: They aren't exactly friends.

Dinitz: They talked.

Kissinger: But they don't exactly give a damn about each other.

[Yariv brings in the pictures and shows them to the Secretary and Mr. Sisco.]

Meir: We haven't told our people about this, because there are families with men

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still there.

Kissinger: All right. I would recommend you don't hold a meeting Tuesday. There is no reason for us to tell them what you've told them.

Let me sum up your position: Unlimited supplies, with UN observers doing the checking, with you standing by.

Yariv: Today, our people first look at the trucks in a general way. Then, we make a thorough check, with UN people there when it is unloaded. That's the present system.

Dinitz: Now it will be UN inspection -- that's new.

Kissinger: What's the practical difference?

Dinitz: It's just prestige.

Meir: What would it matter to us if it's UN at the checkpoint and not a thorough inspection? The most important thing to us is when they are being unloaded.

Yariv: For us, the important point is the Canal.

Meir: Yes.

Kissinger: In return for that you want immediate release of POWs and a lifting of the blockade.

Yariv: And we would undertake continuous supply, for Suez.

Kissinger: How should we formulate this?

Yariv: We shall undertake a system of supply of non-military items to the Third Army. In addition to that, we will undertake to allow a daily supply of food, water and medicine to Suez. The details to be worked out.

Kissinger: How do they get fed now?

Yariv: Just by the reserves they have in Suez, I think. Only medical supplies go in now.

Kissinger: Now the formula for disengagement and the October 22 lines.

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Meir: [reads from cable]: "The question of the October 22 lines will be discussed between the two sides within the framework of disengagement and separation of forces."

Kissinger: If this works, of course we will have no problem. If it doesn't work....

Meir: How long will you stay in Cairo?

Kissinger: One day. Two nights and one day.

Yariv: Is there any possibility to communicate?

Kissinger: Yes. But what is there to communicate?

One tactical suggestion. If you're willing to make one significant concession, other than what you've said, it would be better to tell me now. It would be better to trust me. Don't improve the offer after they reject it.

Meir: Why not hold back this UN checkpoint?

Dinitz: You're learning from Dr. Kissinger!

Kissinger: You're planning this as a test case of not being pushed around; you run the risk of it being a test case of yielding to pressure not from us -- a major risk of a UN-sponsored airlift. A Soviet airlift, or, particularly if I'm not in town, there is a fifty-fifty chance of our joining it. Even if you're not pushed back to the October 22 lines, there is a risk of a UN-sponsored airlift.

Dinitz: On what basis?

Sisco: A violation of the ceasefire, Israeli refusal to go back to the ceasefire line, and a general anti-Israeli attitude. The best you'll get from the U.S. is abstention.

Dinitz: Would there be an incentive for Egypt to release the prisoners in order to prevent a cut-off of supplies and the UN airlift?

Kissinger: That's a gamble you're taking. Maybe Yariv is right.

The reason for the other two points was so they'd at least have the principle accepted of the October 22 lines.

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Dinitz: And the UN road.

Kissinger: That's another phony....

Sisco: I had the impression from you last night that you were considering, on the maps, lines that as practical arrangements could be a face-saver for them.

Kissinger: If I may be somewhat systematic about where we're going to be: I had an anguished call from the head of one of the oil companies. I've kept them dangling with the prospect of what I can do in Cairo. Even if the Egyptians accept, it will be because of the overwhelming weight of the U.S. and Israel; there is no reason then for them to be generous to us. They're not that stupid. The Egyptians have a tactical choice to buy additional goodwill from the U.S. for a later round, or to test how much pressure there can be.

I must say I disagree with your generals who talk to newspapers. In the New York Times, a General said this is a test of who won the war.

Yariv: It was a bad statement from every point of view, military or political.

Kissinger: I think you're fighting the wrong problem as a test case with the U.S. The right problem is what you've identified in your disengagement scheme -- the position of your West Bank force. On the Golan Heights, you have a permanent strategic interest; on the West Bank you have only a negotiating interest.

Yariv: There is no disagreement on that.

Meir: You yourself said there is no hope for a permanent ceasefire even if we go back to the October 22 lines.

Kissinger: But the second round will be fought in a different context.

I don't know which choice the Egyptians will make. I think it will lead to a polarization that will move the Egyptians back towards the Russians, and we can't go to the Saudis and say, "We did such a terrific job, call off your oil boycott." Rockefeller tells me he's within two weeks of blackout in New York.

Meir: If you tell us our position on the West Bank is untenable, and a breakdown is likely....

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Kissinger: Remember what the President said: If the fighting breaks out again, you can't count on American resupply.

Dinitz: It doesn't mean we want to break the ceasefire.

Kissinger: Even if the Egyptians accept, they will do so for reasons that are not helpful to you. They'll do it to get you in the wrong, to fight the October 22nd battle later, with a greater claim on U.S. support.

Meir: As long as the Third Army is there, there will never be a peace in the area.

Kissinger: The great powers will never allow you to destroy the Third Army.

Dinitz: The Secretary thinks that if the opportunity arises, the first thing we want to do is destroy the Third Army.

Kissinger: No, I have no interest in the Third Army except as it affects our relations with the Soviets, because its plight is the result of a violation.

Meir: Why not persuade the Egyptians to agree to a transfer of forces?

Kissinger: That's out of the question. They have no incentive to agree to an outcome of the war which gives them nothing on the East Bank.

That negotiation can just as easily be from the October 22 line.

Yariv: There are big military differences. Our forces risk being cut off.

Kissinger: In a month, ask yourself whether you're better off. With a UN airlift, and no prisoners.

Meir: No prisoners?

Dinitz: That was an understanding between the U.S. and the Soviet Union.

Kissinger: The Soviets have never said they wouldn't do it, but it was in the context of a return to the ceasefire line.

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Sisco: It was in the context of ceasefire, compliance, etc.

Kissinger: If you were Sadat, would you accept?

Yariv: If I thought we had U.S. support.

Dinitz: What is more important to Egypt? Supply, or to push us to the October 22 lines?

Kissinger: They probably think they can get both.

Meir: If we offer them the first thing, supply, there is no need to send helicopters. Will the Russians send troops to push us back to the October 22 lines?

Kissinger: It is not inconceivable, and don't count on the greatest international support.

The strategic choice is whether peace comes through American action or Soviet pressure. The end result is the same, except maybe more moderate.

Sadat will get supplies one way or another.

This is a peanut issue; it is basically a trivial issue, compared to what's coming up -- with disengagement.

Sisco: The spectre of what's being done coming under U.S. auspices makes a helluva difference for the future of the area.

Meir: In 1956 we were pushed back, not by the Soviets but by the U.S. What credit did the U.S. ever get?

Kissinger: I was against our policy but for different reasons. I wanted the first country to buy Russian arms to be humiliated.

You're inviting a greater chance of being pushed back across the whole Sinai.

Meir: [laughing] This is what we're thinking about. It will be worse later.

Kissinger: I've never made a secret of that. I just wanted to try to determine where we go from here.

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I see, as a minimum, the U.S. tolerating a UN airlift, and no prisoners.

When I come back, they'll all unlimber -- with the oil embargo, the British and French. That's my only interest in the Cairo trip. I really do want to pull a rabbit out of the hat. In Vietnam, I stitched it together in three-month segments.

Meir: What will happen in Vietnam?

Kissinger: Of, it will start again. We were ready in April to bomb them. Before Watergate. If you look at our diplomacy, we were leading up to it, with reconnaissance flights, a crescendo of complaints. It would have kept them quiet for two years. Then we not only didn't bomb them; we lost the authority to bomb them and mine them. The Agreement was fine; the policing broke down. The South Vietnamese are in a better position than we could have expected. Then we had Cambodian negotiations set up. We had a written promise from the Chinese. Of course it broke down.

I'm not blaming you at all. I know you were helpful.

Dinitz: They were calling for her impeachment when she wrote a letter about the principle of helping smaller nations.

Kissinger: You were very helpful. But the American Jewish community has a lot to answer for.

Suppose they agree to prisoners but not the blockade?

Meir: It is a question of an immense investment, of Iranian supplies.

Kissinger: Yes, but the question is whether it has to be a condition in this phase.

Meir: It's an integral part of the ceasefire.

Kissinger: So you'll blockade the Third Army.

You still won't give them uninterrupted supply.

Sisco: They'll say they can't because it's part of a return to the October 22 lines.

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Kissinger: The question isn't the merits; the question is what can you get for the opening of the road.

Meir: For the blockade and Sharm el-Shaykh we fought two wars. The signal was May 23 when Nasser drove out the UN force.

Sisco: You say you will talk about the October 22 lines at a later stage; they say they will talk about the blockade at a later stage.

Kissinger: Within a week, there will be a UN airlift. We've discussed it enough. I understand your point of view. It's not unreasonable. It's hopeless but not unreasonable.

If Dinitz gets in touch with Scowcroft, he can get in touch with me instantaneously.

Sisco: Not by airplane.

Dinitz: I hope the Egyptian devices are not so good!

Kissinger: I think we should send all this Cherokee, through the State Department, so we're not so dependent on the airplane.

My judgment is there is next to no chance it will be accepted.

Yariv: I'm not one hundred percent sure.

Kissinger: Maybe. It depends on how much they want to pay for our goodwill.

Yariv: I think he has an interest to pay quite a lot.

Kissinger: We'll have to see.

General, I hope you win this one, but you're playing it wrong.

I'll present it, and I'll present it with conviction.

But if I fail, we have the consolation that you'll present it the next day yourself.

Meir: Then they'll know there is a third major power.

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Kissinger: It doesn't give Sadat anything facesaving he can say he achieved.

Dinitz: What should we say to the press?

Kissinger: That I see the ladies at night is well known!

That we had friendly and constructive talks.

Dinitz: The Washington Post is still on strike.

Kissinger: Really?

Dinitz: If we can do the same with the New York Times, that's half the battle!



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