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Priority AND 969032

By JW NARA Date 8/20/07



DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
Washington, D.C. 20520

S/S 7311909  
TLE Sensitive - M.E.

June 29, 1973

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*a.r.*

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

Subject: Next Steps on the Middle East

General Haig, Assistant to the President, called me this morning to say that the President does not wish the Secretary to proceed with the initiative outlined in the Secretary's Memorandum for the President of June 28 (S/S 7311862) on the above subject. General Haig said that the President is awaiting a response from Brezhnev following the discussion he had with Brezhnev last week on the Middle East and does not wish anything else to be done on this subject until a response from Brezhnev has been received.

I so informed the Secretary and Mr. Sisco.

*TE*

Theodore L. Eliot, Jr.  
Executive Secretary

*POL 27-14 ARAQ-ISR*

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ACCESS REVIEW

- ~~Act. 1~~ - Caption removed; transferred to O/FADRC
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Reviewed by: Elijah Kelly *OKA*  
Date: 9/21 19 77

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(out memo)

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THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

~~J. M. [unclear]~~

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Eyes only=  
M. A. [unclear]  
6/29/73

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June 28, 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Next Steps on the Middle East

I believe the stage is set and the time is now ripe for us to make a diplomatic move seeking to make some modest progress on an Arab-Israeli settlement.

The discussion of the Middle East at the recent Summit made clear that we and the Soviets continue to have a common interest in avoiding a resumption of Arab-Israeli hostilities and a confrontation between ourselves in the area, but that we are no closer together in our approaches to a settlement. In the Security Council debate before the Summit, we left no doubt that we will oppose any attempt in the Council, when it reconvenes in mid-July, to support a one-sided outcome such as a resolution endorsing in some form the Arab-Soviet interpretation of Security Council Resolution 242. We have also said that we will oppose efforts to reactivate major power talks or to create some new outside mechanism as a substitute for negotiations involving the parties themselves.

The Egyptians, who remain key to a negotiated settlement, can thus be under no illusions that the United States will cooperate in efforts to get others to do the job for them or to impose concessions on Israel. At the same time, we do not agree with Israel's views that, if all other doors are kept firmly closed Sadat will come around to negotiating on Israeli terms as they now stand -- i.e., negotiations without pre-conditions but against the background of the Israeli position, as stated to Ambassador Jarring in early

SECRET/NODIS/CEDAR/DOUBLE PLUS

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DECLASSIFIED

Priority

MND 969032

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JW NARA Date 8/20/67

SECRET/NODIS/CEDAR/DOUBLE PLUS

2

1971, that Israel will not withdraw to the pre-June 5, 1967 lines. While Sadat's demand for a prior Israeli commitment to total Israeli withdrawal from Sinai is unrealistic, we have always felt the Israelis are equally unrealistic and are going beyond the provisions of Resolution 242 when they exclude total withdrawal ab initio.

We doubt that Sadat is on the verge of resorting to hostilities, although this risk -- costly as it would be for him -- will grow the longer the stalemate continues. For now, however, we expect that Sadat will continue to pursue his diplomatic strategy of seeking to (1) mobilize support in the United Nations and world public opinion for the Egyptian position on a settlement, isolating the United States and Israel in the process, and (2) persuade those Arab countries where we have important interests (especially Saudi Arabia) to press the United States to modify what the Arabs see as a policy of total support for Israel's position. While we do not foresee immediate dangers to our interests as a result of this strategy, there is no doubt that King Faisal is becoming increasingly restive, and the danger of pressure on our oil needs cannot be ruled out in the longer run. If hostilities were to break out, the risk to U. S. interests in the area would of course rise sharply.

What is needed is a catalyst to get an Egyptian-Israeli negotiating process started. To that end we have developed an essentially procedural proposal under which the two sides would agree to explore in secret talks under US auspices, prior to entering formal negotiations, the basic issue of a final settlement -- how to reconcile Israel's security concerns vis-a-vis Egypt with Egypt's position that it cannot surrender sovereignty over Egyptian territory. To get such secret talks started, we would seek the parties' agreement to a formulation that would provide the conceptual framework for their exploratory talks, (1) establishing the premise that Israel's security and Egypt's territorial concerns are not necessarily irreconcilable, and (2) acknowledging that Resolution 242 neither endorses nor precludes the pre-June 5, 1967 lines as the final Egyptian-Israeli boundary. A specific formulation along these lines is enclosed.

SECRET/NODIS/CEDAR/DOUBLE PLUS

DECLASSIFIED

Priority

MND 969032

By

JW NARA Date 8/20/67

SECRET/NODIS/CEDAR/DOUBLE PLUS

3

I plan to explore this approach in the first instance with the Israelis through their new Ambassador here. Only if Israel agrees would we then approach the Egyptians. Israel will have some problems with such a formulation, particularly in this Israeli election year, but it nevertheless contains certain attractive features. Specifically, it promises a forum for direct Israeli-Egyptian negotiations and does not commit Israel in advance of such negotiations to any change in its substantive position. While this formula would probably not be acceptable to Egypt, at least at the outset, we believe it is not one they could disregard in present circumstances should the Israelis be willing to go along.

There are a number of advantages in taking this step now. Israel is pleased with the outcome of the Summit discussions of the Middle East, with our stance in the Security Council and with our present arms relationship. It should therefore be as receptive as it ever will be to a proposal which we would emphasize we consider important to our national interests in the area. On the Egyptian side, Sadat is looking for a diplomatic alternative and recognizes that the United States must play a key role. Such a move with Israel will be complementary to and, if it works, will reinforce our present dialogue with the Egyptians. Making this effort could also relieve Egyptian pressure in the Security Council for an outcome that could polarize positions further, make both Egypt and Israel even more inflexible, and possibly force us to a veto which would both inhibit our ability to play a constructive middleman role and add to the unhappiness with the U.S. position in the Arab world generally. Such an effort on our part would be particularly welcome to Faisal as evidence of the kind of activity on our part that he has long sought. Finally, we expect that one result of the Security Council round in late July will be renewed activity by Ambassador Jarring or, more likely, a more active role by Secretary General Waldheim, who is already talking about a trip to the area in late July or early August. Such evidence of diplomatic activity in the United Nations context would both buy time and provide public cover for our secret diplomatic efforts.

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DECLASSIFIED

Priority

MND 969032

By

JW NARA Date 8/20/67

SECRET/NODIS/CEDAR/DOUBLE PLUS

4

I will be undertaking exploratory talks with the Israeli Ambassador as outlined in this memorandum before my departure for Europe. After we have had an Israeli reaction, I will want to discuss the results with you and seek your approval before any approach to the Egyptians.



William P. Rogers

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Priority

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SECRET/NODIS/CEDAR/DOUBLE PLUSFORMULA WE WOULD EXPLORE WITH ISRAEL  
CALLING FOR TALKS BETWEEN  
ISRAEL AND EGYPT

The Governments of Egypt and Israel agree to engage in private talks under the auspices of the United States for the purpose of exploring whether they can achieve an agreed basis for negotiations on the terms of the peaceful and accepted settlement called for in Security Council Resolution 242. They agree to proceed in these talks on the basis that they would be without prejudice to the positions of either party. The talks would be devoted in the first instance to examining, before formal negotiations are initiated, possibilities for reconciling Israel's concern for security with Egypt's concern for sovereignty over its territory, consistent with the provisions and principles of Resolution 242.

In agreeing to engage in such talks, Egypt and Israel take note of the fact that Resolution 242 neither explicitly endorses nor explicitly precludes the line which existed on June 4, 1967 as the final, secure and recognized boundary between them.

Upon notification to each other through the United States of the acceptance of the above as a basis for their secret talks, Egypt and Israel will designate representatives to meet under U.S. auspices in Washington.

Egypt and Israel agree to maintain absolute secrecy regarding both the existence and substance of these talks. It is understood that these talks do not preclude any efforts or activities looking toward a settlement that may be in progress in any other forum.

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