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By JB NARA Date 8-2

Chapter 13
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MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: Prime Minister Golda Meir of Israel
Ambassador Simcha Dinitz
Mordechai Gazit, Director of Prime
Minister's Office
Minister Mordechai Shalev
General Aharon Yariv, Former Director
of Military Intelligence
General Yisrael Leor, Special Assistant
to the Prime Minister
Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State
Peter W. Rodman, NSC Staff

DATE AND TIME: Thursday, November 1, 1973
8:10 - 10:25 a.m.

PLACE: The Blair House
Washington, D. C.

Kissinger: Will you be staying until Saturday?

PM Meir: Until Saturday night. Because we can't come into Israel on Saturday.

Kissinger: Of course.

PM Meir: Please eat.

Kissinger: Will you stay in Washington?

PM Meir: Yes. I am afraid to go to New York, because there will be bond meetings, UJA meetings, all the time.

Kissinger: You met with the Egyptians, General?

Yariv: Yes.

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PM Meir: He started direct negotiations. Without auspices.

Yariv: They were in the presence of two UN officers. Then they stepped aside and we started direct negotiations.

Kissinger: Are these talks going on now?

PM Meir: Yes. I just had a call from Allon. They're dealing now with the wounded.

Yariv: The exchange of wounded prisoners.

* * *

PM Meir: Do you want to begin?

Kissinger: It is up to you.

PM Meir: I'm sure you understand if I ask to come here now, and I left home now, it's because things have reached the stage where, beyond the issues of substance, things must be made clear.

Kissinger: I agree. It was a good thing you came here.

PM Meir: We can take stands for or against, but we can't do it piecemeal.

We need to know the plans that are being discussed. We need to know, do we get things after they're done? After it is worked out by other parties?

The horror of the last week was too much. Maybe we need people with stronger nerves.

Kissinger: Which week? After the war?

PM Meir: Yes. After the war. The war was enough, but that we can take. If we live one hundred years, it will be impossible to tell all the impossible acts of heroism of our youngsters. But what we can't take is being told at late hours, "You have to do this. Take your choice."

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Maybe Israel has to do everything Egypt wants. But we have to know what is being planned between ^{the} parties. Are there plans for the negotiations? We're responsible to our people.

We have had wars before. But this is the first time we've had demonstrations. I had to meet with the wives and parents of our prisoners of war.

What is in jeopardy now is the greatest thing we have, the confidence of our people in us. We promise to them, and we find twenty-four hours later we can't deliver.

Kissinger: Well, I appreciate....

PM Meir: We can take the worst, without any trimmings. You people decide.

Kissinger: I appreciate.... I must say I'm outraged at the stories in Israeli newspapers. I read in Kraft again that we and the Russians agreed on things that I didn't tell you when I was in Tel Aviv, and that you came here to find out from the President the things I didn't tell you.

Yariv: That's pure guesswork on their part.

Kissinger: After what was done here, it's unbelievable. So as far as I'm concerned, after my trip I'm going to dissociate myself and have someone appointed to handle it.

PM Meir: We have as much control over our press as you have over yours.

Kissinger: I've told you for months what the psychological climate is here. It is now fed by our allies and it is supported by every single official in the Government. What I've tried to explain to you is that the war has liberated all these tendencies. Regardless of the outcome. It is not your leadership that is the problem. No one else could have done what you did.

There are no understandings with the Soviet Union. In fact, the Soviet Union has said directly to the President I undermined everything that was agreed.

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And it seemed plausible to him.

There are two questions: Was there a secret deal? The answer is no. You know everything. I told you everything. Within six hours you heard it. You saw the understanding on joint auspices.

When I went to Moscow, the purpose was to get you forty-eight more hours. I thought they were going to the Security Council that night. How could we have voted against a ceasefire Saturday night?

I asked for battle reports. You gave me good military reports but you didn't tell me what you intended. I had no reason to think twelve more hours, twenty-four more hours, were decisive. I didn't know whether you were heading north or south. It makes no difference now. In ignorance of what your strategic plans were, with them having a unilateral capability to bring about a ceasefire anyway, we made a ceasefire agreement, with direct negotiations which was always your position.

Then you took the Third Army after the ceasefire, which was not expected. Even when you spoke to me, you were talking about Port Fuad. Had I known about it, I would have done different things in Moscow, like delaying submission of the resolution.

Maybe you don't believe our communications broke down. But it's true. We use our airplane for communications so the State Department wouldn't see what I was saying to the President. Maybe the Russians jammed it. Maybe it was atmospheric. We'll never know. Every frequency broke down. It has never happened before. And I didn't know it at the time, for four hours.

We were out of communication for four to five hours. So we finally went back to State communications.

At that time I didn't believe the Russians would jam it because I didn't see any Russian interest in doing it. But maybe they wanted to delay our communication with you. I have used this communication system every trip to Peking and every trip to Moscow.

There is no understanding with the Russians, except on joint auspices.

In terms of strategy, it is obvious what they are trying to do. To force us step-by-step into a showdown situation. If you think you're in a bad situation, try a situation where every communication gets through to the President from the Russians and Egyptians. There are daily

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messages from our allies, which I have held ^{up} up/to now.

This is where we are. We can try to work out a common strategy in this framework.

It is an unusual situation where an army is trapped after the ceasefire went into effect. There would be no problem with us about the Third Army if you had done it before the ceasefire.

PM Meir: Why believe the Egyptians? Why is it that everything we say isn't believed? It is an impossible situation.

Kissinger: It may be, but it's the situation.

PM Meir: I don't have to take that. Whatever Sadat says is the Bible?

Kissinger: Not what Sadat says.

PM Meir: Did you get a history of that Saturday of the convoy?

Kissinger: We've not given you any trouble with that convoy. There were many proposals to have an American airlift to the convoy. There were many appeals direct to the President for that.

Meir: The Egyptians only took twenty trucks through.

Kissinger: That is not an issue now. I don't think anyone has criticized the recent handling of the convoy.

PM Meir: On Saturday, they were waiting at another place. Why can't we be believed?

Kissinger: It was a minor problem.

Dinitz: At that time it was a major problem.

Kissinger: It would have been if it had escalated to the next higher level. The majority of our Government wanted, that Saturday, to start an airlift.

Yariv: Technically it would have been very difficult. It is irrelevant now.

PM Meir: Who knows where the line was?

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Kissinger: That's what I have been telling you. I certainly don't know.

PM Meir: Yesterday we got a note from the UN man.

Dinitz: Siilasvuo!

PM Meir: He wants an answer by noon whether we're prepared to move to the October 22 line. Who knows where the line is? There is no reason to accept what the Russians and Egyptians say. In Moscow you said you didn't know.

If the Egyptians close the road, it's part of the ceasefire.

Kissinger: I agree. I've told the Egyptian Foreign Minister every time that they have to lift the blockade, whatever happens.

PM Meir: They link it with the wounded. They started shooting at the point where the convoy was.

Kissinger: These are all details now, not relevant to the basic problem, which has two parts: The ceasefire, what happens to it. The second is the long-term strategy.

The history of last week -- what you received was the absolute minimum given the situation in this Government and the pressures in this Government. It was the absolute minimum. If you don't believe me, we can test it, and you'll see.

After all, you're still in your positions, and there hasn't been a new Security Council resolution. So you have the basic bargaining cards. The basic situation here your Ambassador knows. And it's not the result of an agreement with the Russians. That's what I've prevented up to now.

At this point, there is no agreement with anybody, either the Egyptians or Russians.

PM Meir: As for the ceasefire, they can't push us back to a line which they don't even know.

Kissinger: I have been telling you. There are two possibilities. You can agree to know where it was -- invent a line, and if they agree, go back to

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it. These are just the theoretical possibilities. In no event should military supply be permitted to reach the Third Army. You should tie it to a prisoner exchange and a lifting of the blockade.

The second possibility is that you agree to go back and agree to discuss where it is. You stay where you are until the line is agreed.

My judgment is that in either event, non-military convoys have to be let through. And you can insist on the prisoners and the lifting of the blockade.

The difference is that in the former case the exchange of prisoners would be more rapidly done.

The Russians have been beating the President all week for a new resolution for a return to October 22 lines.

I have told the Egyptians to get the Russians off our back. I told them that I wanted an understanding from them that whatever ^{the} October 22 lines are, there have to be no military supplies, an exchange of prisoners, and an end to the blockade.

Three times they agreed to no military supply, then three times they've withdrawn it.

On the blockade, you saw the paper we gave you. We just received it. We have not discussed it. We have taken no position.

Yariv: The Fahmi paper?

Kissinger: Yes. [Tab A]

That's all we discussed, just the ceasefire.

We've never discussed the line, or where it is, just the question of military supplies.

So I'm quite sure we have a commitment from them, which I believe, that there will be no military supply to the Third Army. But it would require some package deal.

I told them they couldn't expect a decision until you consulted with your Cabinet. I told the President, too, that you couldn't make a decision now. So you have until Sunday. Monday I am leaving. This tells you what time you have.

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The Russians have now last night made a formal demand for helicopters to be used for non-military supplies to the Third Army.

PM Meir: They have already tried to fly in. We knocked them down.

Kissinger: I told the Russians I don't want to get into these details. I told the Egyptians that any proposition we get through the Russians will be automatically rejected. They have to talk to us, not through Moscow.

Now the question is, how long can this game be played?

That is the situation.

You wonder what five hours takes with Fahmi. It takes five hours because you can talk for hours without saying anything.

But there has never been any discussion of that peace plan. There was only discussion of the ceasefire, the blockade, and the prisoners.

The difficulty is that when Dobrynin saw the President, the President practically committed himself to a return to the October 22 lines. But I pulled it off. Dobrynin saw it. They're screaming at me for undermining it.

Dinitz: When you say the principle of non-military supplies, who supervises it?

Kissinger: UN observers.

Dinitz: UN.

Kissinger: I didn't want to negotiate this. They say UN observers should be on the roads. Then they said they should be on the bridges. They agreed it will be done under UN supervision.

PM Meir: According to our people, objectively speaking, the lines as they are held now are impossible. Even if both sides are willing to stop fighting. I don't think there have been fifteen hours with no shooting.

Yariv: Not ten.

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PM Meir: There is shooting all the time. That's not a ceasefire. Bab El-Mandeb is certainly not a ceasefire. So the other side doesn't keep it. So we shoot back. When they send helicopters, we knock them down.

Kissinger: We didn't say anything about it.

PM Meir: The best way is what we proposed -- separate the forces.

Kissinger: That is out of the question. The Shah wrote to the President a personal letter saying that our proposal of a return to the status quo of October 8 was out of the question. He said we were proposing the overthrow of Sadat. The President won't accept it, as soon as he realizes.

The only thing conceivable is an exchange of the Third Army for the West Bank. But that you won't do. Leave the Second Army.

PM Meir: We didn't start the war, nor did we lose. Now we get these demands.

Kissinger: That's true.

PM Meir: You said in Tel Aviv you were horrified when you heard of the casualties. I can name twenty that we here all know. We are one family. We can't take all this and hand him a victory. What he wanted was clear. What Asad wanted was clear.

Kissinger: All this is true. But it doesn't change the situation.

PM Meir: Why should we accept it?

Kissinger: You are seeing the President at 12:00. I'm not your problem. What is it you want to get out of the President? It is impossible to get what you're talking about. If you want, I'll put Secretary Rush in charge and see if he filters your views to the President better.

It's a fact. It makes no difference whether it's just. I'm telling you the situation, which I've kept under control for five years and now is out of control.

There is no way for the U.S. to support an exchange of armies as you propose. You'll be visibly separated from us.

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PM Meir: If there is no way to support that, then the next best is that both sides meticulously agree to hold to lines where they are now at.

Kissinger: That I agree with.

PM Meir: Siilasvuo said he needed an answer by noon. His spokesman in Cairo said no one knows where the October 22 line is. We need a lifting of the blockade, immediate exchange of prisoners, and non-military supplies. We would inspect it, and the UN too. Both of us.

You know, the first truck they brought was filled with filter cigarettes. That was for their officers. The second was filled with biscuits. And the third was jerry cans with water, but only one layer. That's how they operate. We're not responsible.

Kissinger: You're not.

PM Meir: They have to get off our back.

Kissinger: I have maneuvered for a week to avoid taking an American position on that.

PM Meir: What should we be doing? We really want your advice.

Kissinger: I'm not saying you are unreasonable. Tragic situations develop which no one can prevent. Every day we get a letter from Heath and a letter from Pompidou. You rely too much on the Jewish Senators.

Dinitz: We don't rely on them.

PM Meir: Who should we rely on?

Kissinger: They can't help you in this situation. The Washington Post wrote an editorial yesterday which drove the President crazy. For five years they attacked us for every ceasefire proposition on Vietnam, for every plane we sent to Cambodia -- now they take the tough line on Israel. The President was infuriated. I tell you it's counterproductive. I don't say you did it.

Dinitz: The only editorial we influenced was the one that praised the President for a tough line.

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Kissinger: I didn't even read it. I saw the President yesterday; he had read it and was livid. He wanted to cancel your visit. He said he wouldn't be pressured like this.

On the October 22 lines, all week long I've got out of a discussion on the lines. I did it by telling the Russians that we were talking to the Egyptians and telling the Egyptians to get the Russians off our backs.

We can get through until next Wednesday when I am in Egypt, when something has to happen. If you could let a few more non -military convoys through. It's a time-wasting thing. It also gets the Russians off our back on the helicopters; we can say the helicopters are no longer necessary.

I understand the trucks don't get to the bank, the way they unload them. So what is the difference if you agree to let fifty more through?

If you agree to go back to the October 22 lines, and then discuss with the Egyptians where the line is.

Unfortunately the Russians photographed something.

PM Meir: Who knows when?

Kissinger: Yes. I can hold the line here. Well, the Department of Defense has photos, which I have kept from being distributed or published in intelligence reports. We photographed only twice. The twelfth and the twenty-fifth. With the SR-71. I have to find whether they are guesses or real.

Yariv: If I may say, Mr. Secretary, if you're looking for strategy for the next two days....

Kissinger: Yes.

Yariv: We can divide the question of non-military supply from the question of the October 22 line. We can discuss the question of supplies with the exchange of prisoners, not with the line. In my talk with the Egyptian general he understood that the question of the October 22 line was impossible. It wouldn't get us out of it. The question of the line would be with the question of the disengagement of forces. It is shown he understood this because he came up with a plan.

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Kissinger: The plan I gave you yesterday.

Yariv: He gave hints they were not so firm on that.

So why don't we work out the question of supplies together with the prisoners and Bab El-Mandeb?

Kissinger: Frankly, I don't think it will work.

Yariv: Can we juxtapose our plan and their plan to the level of discussion between you and us? We don't accept their plan. They don't accept ours.

PM Meir: It's ridiculous. They start a war and lose. And they want us to hand it to them.

Kissinger: It won't take much to get the U.S. Government to support a return to the '67 borders.

What you now need is time. The question is time.

You keep making reasonable arguments. I keep telling you what the facts are. This is the lousiest assignment I've had since I've been here.

The other night it was obvious to Dobrynin that the President agreed to the October 22 lines and that I stopped him. If they get an appointment with him while I am away, which is not excluded, he'll agree to the October 22 lines. The Russians have proposed senior U.S. and Soviet ceasefire observers. I have stopped that. But there is one other aspect I wanted your opinion on, that I'll discuss later.

We have good intelligence on what the British and French are saying, and they're worse than the Russians. And they are appealing to the President -- on top of the Russians, on top of the Egyptians, on top of the oil people, and on top of the whole Government.

If I were playing your hand My only problem is you are too honest. You are too uncomplicated.

PM Meir: Even when we're telling the truth, we're not believed.

Kissinger: It is not a question of being honest but of being more complex. You're too easy to isolate.

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I don't think you can avoid accepting in principle the October 22 lines. Then wrap it into the first phase of the Egyptian plan, or another plan. The other possibility is to delay answering. On Wednesday in Cairo I can avoid accepting it there, and I can say I have to check with you.

You accept the principle of October 22 lines, which are to be established in the negotiations between Egypt and you. That will be hopelessly screwed up. In the meantime, non-military convoys can go on these disputed roads, under UN supervision. It is best if it is UN supervision alone, but if you insist... Then when this negotiation on the October 22nd lines is completed, then there will be an exchange of prisoners and a lifting of the blockade.

PM Meir: When it's over?

Kissinger: They won't exchange prisoners before then.

PM Meir: Then they won't have convoys. We have a democratic form of government. All we can do is resign. I won't do it. I won't go to my people and tell them I accept this plan.

Yariv: I was with the Prime Minister when she had to convince the military to accept the one convoy.

PM Meir: There is a break between us and our best men.

Kissinger: What's your plan?

Yariv: I think it's possible, if we're tough enough -- with your help. When they say no, they're counting on your help.

PM Meir: Yes.

Yariv: If you permit an arrangement on non-military supply, this is coupled with the prisoners and Bab El-Mandeb, and with an agreement that the October 22 line will be discussed in the context of disengagement. I have the impression they might accept it, on the basis of my discussions with the Egyptian general.

PM Meir: I'm convinced the more they get, the more they want. Sadat knows he lost; now his people know.

Yariv is right. They know the Russians by themselves can't give it to them. Only with the Americans. So the key is the stand of the American Government.

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Kissinger: I have told you what it is.

PM Meir: Either we give in to them or we fight.

Kissinger: They're not getting everything they want from the Americans. We're in a peculiar circumstance of a territorial occupation after the ceasefire, which puts the President in a peculiar situation. There is the possibility that if you let the roads open, you can trade it for the prisoners.

PM Meir: But the blockade is part of the ceasefire situation.

Kissinger: So is the October 22nd line.

Yariv: In the Ismail message number 9, he asked for a complete ceasefire, by 1300 October 27.

Kissinger: What are you going to tell the President - - who doesn't know all these details?

PM Meir: We're prepared to keep the ceasefire on our part; we are prepared to make an arrangement to make an absolute ceasefire, by our plan. But part of the ceasefire is the blockade, which should have been lifted immediately. If you had known of that, you would have spoken of it in Moscow, I am sure, as you raised the prisoners with them.

Kissinger: But neither are you and Ismail living up to the October 22 ceasefire.

PM Meir: They didn't stop shooting on October 22nd. What are we supposed to do?

Kissinger: That's irrelevant. It cuts against you too. If you could live with it on October 22, you can live with it now.

PM Meir: Why should we live with it?

Kissinger: There is no sense in debating the issue of justice here. You're only three million. It is not the first time in the history of the Jews that unjust things have happened.

PM Meir: Yes.

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Kissinger: I'm just telling you the facts of life. The President won't argue with you; he'll just do what he wants. He never argues with visitors.

Yariv: The road. What they're interested in is the road.

Kissinger: I agree. It is conceivable they would link the prisoners to the UN force on the road, and you can stay where you are.

PM Meir: Our forces stay but the UN checks.

Kissinger: That may be a possibility. Within that context, it would be more elegant if you also agreed in principle on the October 22 line, subject to discussions on where they are, and then not agree on where the line is.

PM Meir: And the POWs?

Kissinger: In exchange for the road.

PM Meir: And Bab El-Mandeb?

Kissinger: Well....

What I need to gain until Wednesday is, first of all, to be able to say that something is moving by Wednesday. Just so I can say you have to go back to Israel to make a decision, but will let the convoys through in the interim. I've got to tell the President something that comes out of this meeting. Or else, my prediction is he'll move unilaterally.

PM Meir: The number of trucks is about 150 and they're moving. They are already moving plasma.

Kissinger: Yes. You've got to do one more thing until Wednesday.

PM Meir: Can I get up and say there will be no more movement of trucks until there is an exchange of prisoners --and then let a truck move with no prisoners? I can't do that.

There is no moving of even the wounded prisoners -- except for a gift of one. But there'll be a vote of no confidence.

Kissinger: Then I don't know what to do.

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Dinitz: Why can't the movement of trucks be linked to the prisoners?

Kissinger: I can tell Fahmi, "Here's the deal, can you accept?" He'll say yes or no. Then on Wednesday I'll have to spend it talking about a permanent settlement. It puts them in the driver's seat. If you want time until Wednesday, let the convoy's through and I can spend the week working out the arrangements. He can claim a big victory getting the trucks. That's why I need til Wednesday.

You're saying that in order not to foreclose the situation you're letting some trucks through, until you make the decisions.

If I put the proposal to Fahmi today, and he doesn't accept, I'll be under pressure from the Russians.

Yariy: Can you stipulate that the trucks already on the road -- 100 to 150 -- that these will be let through? This will get to Tuesday.

Kissinger: But I have the proposal from the Russians to fly in helicopters.

Dinitz: Do they have the right to do that?

Kissinger: [Laughing] Your Ambassador knows what the situation is. I can't persuade the people who want to fly American helicopters in that they can't let the UN helicopters in. Whether they have the right or not.

PM Meir: You said, we're only three million. Does this mean the Russians can bully us? Like the Czechs? You're the only one who can stop them. And I don't just mean by force.

Kissinger: We did it all week.

PM Meir: But the Congress....

Kissinger: The Congress doesn't want American troops in the Middle East. Hatfield submitted a resolution saying no American troops can be sent to the Middle East. I argued against it in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The mere fact such a resolution was introduced is a handicap to our strategy.

Laird comes back from the Midwest saying the only thing the people want is to keep out of the Middle East.

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The newsmen here are saying we cooked it up for domestic reasons.

When the Soviets were on the verge of landing troops, the people here didn't want U.S. troops there. We would have landed troops in the Sinai if we had to, but could never do it again.

I'm telling you the situation. We have to devise a common strategy. We can delay things, we can wait for certain things to crystallize, we can wait for others to make mistakes. When the President is down ^{to} thirty percent, what difference is the Jewish vote?

PM Meir: It is not just the Jewish vote.

Kissinger: Anti-semitism is very popular in the United States.

PM Meir: Scheel said it was like 1938.

Kissinger: But where was he? Now that we canceled the Schlesinger trip, and publicly rebuked them -- now they'll make a few noises, when it's safe.

We have very good intelligence on what the British and French say.

PM Meir: They say it publicly.

Kissinger: What they say privately is worse.

I must say the President doesn't know the details about access and the roads.

Yariv: The first business is to gain time.

Kissinger: Yes, and let someone show progress.

Yariv: With what is on the road, we can reach Monday and Tuesday. But the Prime Minister can't move even a one-time deal without the prisoners.

PM Meir: Not even the wounded.

Kissinger: Then we'll have the Russian helicopters.

PM Meir: You know the horror stories from Syria about our prisoners?

Kissinger: Yes. We're not talking about the truth.

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I told your Ambassador I wouldn't have started with 100 trucks; I would have sold it four times in lots of 25. I was astonished at the number it turned out to be.

Meir: Where did the number come from?

Kissinger: Not from here.

Yariv: They brought them.

Kissinger: I thought you should propose twenty-five. I never proposed a number. When I talked with the North Vietnamese I made three proposals a week which were unacceptable but which looked forthcoming. It was for McGovern, not for Hanoi.

It is irrelevant now.

I have two possibilities. I can propose to Fahmi today that UN forces will be on the roads, in return for an exchange of prisoners and an end to the blockade, and you're willing to discuss the October 22 lines. I would drop "in the context of disengagement". The danger is that if they don't accept, the Russians will come screaming back, and we'll have to come back to you before you are back in Israel. If they do accept, what do we talk about on Wednesday?

Let him have a big victory in letting some more supplies in.

Dinitz: If they want supplies, they have to have something with the prisoners -- or else the Government can't do it.

Kissinger: How many have they?

Yariv: They have 45 wounded.

Meir: We have close to 7,000 in our hospitals.

Kissinger: Mostly Egyptians?

Meir: I'm speaking only of Egyptians.

Yariv: Plus a couple of hundred Syrians.

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Meir: The Egyptians have about 400, including 45 wounded.

Kissinger: There is a chance that if I can push it to the point where he can't let me leave without accomplishing something we might get that. The UN on the road, and an exchange of prisoners and end to the blockade. You stay in your positions, but the UN -- only the UN -- checks the convoys.

Meir: On Mount Scopus, the UN checked with the Jordanians.

Yariv: The Jordanians checked, under UN supervision.

Meir: Non-military convoys being checked by the Israelis and the UN. But we're certainly not getting off the roads; they're in our lines.

Kissinger: They're in your lines, but I'm thinking of the psychology of it.

Meir: Bab El-Mandeb falls naturally in the ceasefire. I can't say until I get back.

Kissinger: What do we do until then?

Yariv: You tell them that the trucks are still going.

Kissinger: That's not enough. I have to have a position vis-a-vis the Russians and a position vis-a-vis the Egyptians. There is no way around it.

Meir: I'm prepared on my own -- if I'm fired, I'm fired -- if all the wounded are returned immediately, and the blockade is lifted, and a list of all the prisoners is handed over -- if all this comes about in the next forty-eight hours, then we will put in a limited number of trucks of the convoy until all the prisoners are exchanged.

Gazit: There are still one hundred trucks left.

Meir: It's semantics.

Dinitz: By the time you get to Cairo we can add another twenty-five.

Meir: There are already one hundred. Sixty are unloaded.

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EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

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Dinitz: If by Wednesday they are finished unloading the trucks that are on the way now, we will allow an extra day's unloading.

Meir: It must include what I said.

Dinitz: Yes, linked to those conditions.

Kissinger: You can't get Bab El-Mandeb on top of all that, just for one convoy. It is just as reasonable for you to go back to the October 22 lines. They can take the position that when you're back at the October 22 lines, they will lift the blockade.

Meir: The Shah will be up in arms. It's in his interest, too, to have the Red Sea open.

Gazit: It may sound naive, but it may be useful to emphasize the importance of the talks going on between the generals.

Kissinger: But if I emphasize it too much, the Egyptians will break them off.

I really must tell you you have no appreciation of the situation you face in this country. You may appreciate the battlefield situation.

Meir: Then if we appreciate the situation, we must accept everything the Egyptians put to us? It's only the beginning.

Kissinger: No. But you're right, it's only the beginning.

If you take the absolutist position you've taken with me, you'll be confronted sooner or later with an imposition. No one will admit it. I'll admit it.

What will we discuss with the President?

Meir: We'll discuss military supplies. The Syrians and Egyptians now have more than they had before.

Kissinger: I'm told we have thirteen ships being loaded now. Do you want more?

Meir: There are things we are worried about. They're moving the missiles back in. In 1970, we were told, "What do you want us to do?"

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EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

Kissinger: What will you tell the President?

Meir: Tell him either two things. Either there is a disengagement of forces -- I don't think it's humiliating to Egypt -- or we'll discuss how to meticulously keep the ceasefire.

Kissinger: If you force him into an absolute decision, to go back or not to go back, I tell you...

Meir: We're prepared to discuss an absolute ceasefire.

Kissinger: We need a buffer. How will we object to another ceasefire resolution?

Yariv: The Egyptian General said they'd consider disengagement.

Kissinger: You're seeing the President in two hours, and I have to go back. We have not even discussed the peace negotiations.

Meir: That we don't know anything about.

Kissinger: We don't know anything about it either.

Meir: We're prepared to discuss.

Kissinger: With whom? When?

Meir: Anytime. The paper Fahmi gave you is fine -- back to the 1967 borders, then we deal with the Palestinians!

What's happening with the Syrians?

Kissinger: Their Deputy Foreign Minister wants to come down. I haven't scheduled him yet.

Meir: Our prisoners are, every one, in danger of their lives. They are in danger of being maimed or killed.

Kissinger: The Syrians are committed to a ceasefire.

Meir: I know they have the Russians backing them in every position. It is assumed that because they are as they are, they can get away with anything.

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Kissinger: I've told you the positions are unequal. There are more pressures on you than on them.

Yariy: Can we go back to what we do until Wednesday?

Kissinger: I've told you. If it takes to Sunday or Monday to unload the present one hundred trucks, and you can let another fifty trucks through, it will get the Russians off our back.

Meir: What will we get? The wounded immediately, a list of all of them, and Bab El-Mandeb.

Kissinger: Bab El-Mandeb they won't agree to. My guess is they'll insist on a return to the October 22 lines, and all hell will break loose in the UN next week.

Meir: We can say the October 22 lines, and not one truck. They can't have it both ways.

Kissinger: I've told Fahmi we'll support the October 22 lines in the UN if they discuss it. If we can get that deal, and on top of it you say you're willing to discuss the October 22 lines, you can still discuss it for six months, and by then there will be the POW exchange.

You had better tell the President that I made a proposition to you, that it's very painful for you to accept and you'll probably be overthrown but you'll present it to the Government. Then Monday tell me I can do it.

Meir: Of all the countries in the world, no one put up such a bitter struggle for prisoners as you. For every family, it's the same, but there is really no comparison. A family in Los Angeles doesn't share it with a family in Brooklyn the way all the families do in Israel.

Kissinger: But I don't know what to do.

Meir: I faced a woman the other day. She had lived through Hitler and came here with one son. She is dying of cancer. He wasn't even fighting.

Dinitz: He was on the UN observer force.

Meir: What can I say to her? She appeals to me, "Release my son." As if I can do it.

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Kissinger: That's a good argument to use with the President. Raise that.

You can tell the President you won't accept the October 22 lines. How can you explain why you could accept it on October 22 but not now?

Meir: Why not a disengagement of forces?

Kissinger: You can raise anything you want with the Egyptians. But not in the proposition.

It would be better if I spring it on Sadat than if I give it to Fahmi and then they're waiting for me there.

I've already told them you don't have the authority to make a decision -- because you have a Cabinet of twenty-five, of whom eight want your job.

Yariv: Eight is a small number, Mr. Secretary!

Kissinger: Let me say to them that once the present trucks are through, you'll let more through. You don't have to give numbers.

Dinitz: It has to be with prisoners.

Yariv: I understand your point -- a one-time shot of additional lorries.

Kissinger: You don't have to say a one-time shot. By then I'll be in Morocco.

Kissinger: The UN controls military supplies, plus prisoners, plus lifting the blockade and you'll discuss the October 22 lines. It grants the principle of the October 22 lines but I assume they'll not quickly agree where they are.

Dinitz: The UN and we to check. How can we rely on every UN observer?

Meir: We had the experience of nineteen years on Mt. Scopus where the Jordanians went through the trucks, with the UN looking on. Now we say, "Alright, together with the UN." Supposing it's a Yugoslav, or an Indian, or a Swede? You yourself say everyone's against us.

Kissinger: It is not inconceivable you'll get forced back to the 22nd lines, if we don't have a buffer, a diplomatic buffer.

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Meir: What do you mean, forced back?

Kissinger: A joint U. S. -Soviet Resolution..

Meir: There is not much difference between us.

Kissinger: No. There are two differences -- the UN inspection with the Israelis looking on.

Meir: All right.

Kissinger: I've no reason to think that they'll accept it. I haven't discussed it with them.

Dinitz: We understand.

Kissinger: The second is, do you discuss with them the return to the October 22nd lines?

Gazit: Could we use different language? A redeployment in accord with the UN resolutions?

Meir: I can't make a decision.

Kissinger: I don't want to give the proposal to Fahmi. I just want to tell him you were angry and said nasty things, which is true! Also that you're going back, that you have to tell the Cabinet about our discussion, that there will be no interruption in the convoys of non-military supplies. I won't say one truck or two. Just "no interruption." I'll tell the Russians, too, so no helicopters are needed. And the wounded, and the list.

Gazit: And the wounded.

Kissinger: Do you agree?

Yariv: Yes. And the permission of the Red Cross to visit them all.

Kissinger: My problem is easier with Sadat if I don't have to fight on the principle of a return to the October 22nd lines. I can tell him that in the meantime he has to permit an arrangement on the roads, with no interruption of supplies, and lifting the blockade, etc.

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EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY

I'd rather discuss this with him for four hours than discuss a peace settlement.

Dinitz: If the Prime Minister is going to take to the Government the decision whether to agree to the principle of the October 22nd lines...

Kissinger: I won't settle it in Cairo. I'll send it to you from Cairo, and you take two to three days to consider it.

Dinitz: Fine if the Prime Minister goes to the Cabinet. But can we and you have an understanding that you won't push us off the road?

Kissinger: You can get an understanding from us that we don't know where the 22nd line is. That you can get from the President, if you permit me to tell him I've put the proposal to you, which is very painful....

I don't know whether you can get it from the Egyptians.

And for god's sake don't make a proposal like this to the Egyptians this weekend.

Yariv: No. Of course.

Kissinger: It would be better if you made an obnoxious proposal over the weekend. So I can go to them in Cairo with a big concession. We can work it out.

Yariv: They're awaiting a reply from us Monday on Fahmi's plan.

Kissinger: We need another talk tomorrow on the peace settlement.

Meir: And military supplies.

Kissinger: I didn't know it was a problem.

Meir: Some things are not yet approved.

Dinitz: You stopped with 34 Phantoms.

Kissinger: I've arranged that the 40 are in addition to what you were granted before. They may argue about two, but you have at least 38.

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Yariv: The question of military supplies is quite complicated.

Kissinger: All you've got are on top of what was already agreed to.
We should get together tomorrow on the peace negotiations.

Yariv: And also military supplies.

Kissinger: Yes. We'll meet tomorrow.

[The meeting ended at 10:25 a. m.]