

October 27, 1969
**Memorandum for Dr. Kissinger: Go Ahead with
Dobrynin Tomorrow?**

Citation:

"Memorandum for Dr. Kissinger: Go Ahead with Dobrynin Tomorrow?", October 27, 1969, Wilson Center Digital Archive, From the Six Day War to Yom Kipper: Selected US Documents on the Arab-Israeli Conflict, 1969-1973, a briefing book prepared for the international workshop, "New Evidence on the Arab-Israeli Conflict" (Wilson Center, June 11, 2007).

<https://digitalarchive.umd.edu/document/230156>

Summary:

Saunders gives the pros and cons of Sisco proceeding with a meeting he plans to have with Dobrynin to discuss their working paper. Saunders believes that Moscow is unlikely to accept this move as a concession, and that a settlement is the American's main chance to turn the tide in favor of them in the Middle East.

Original Language:

English

Contents:

Original Scan

DECLASSIFIED
Authority E012958
By W/NARA Date 3/6/02

INFORMATION 3544

October 29, 1969

SECRET/HODIS

MEMORANDUM FOR DR. KISSINGER

FROM: Harold H. Saunders

SUBJECT: Go Ahead with Dobrynin Tomorrow?

The most useful thing I believe I can do for you this morning is to lay out the arguments for and against Joe Sisco's giving his new formula to Dobrynin tomorrow. You have been over the ground. This is simply a checklist. I shall try to avoid being an advocate.

I. Would this move be regarded by Moscow in the total US-USSR context as a concession?

A. Pro.

1. This would be the first time we have formally stated a US position on the UAR-Israel border since January 20. We have hinted at it in a number of ways, but Moscow still regards this as the key missing link in our position.
2. Moscow would regard this as strengthening Cairo's negotiating position, at least somewhat. It would also improve Cairo's case before world opinion. The Soviet client would gain and the US client be set back.
3. If Moscow read our move against the background of the Lebanese crisis, it might assume that Washington had finally decided its Mid-East position had deteriorated beneath tolerable levels. Moscow might regard us as playing our hole card from weakness.
4. Coming right after quick US agreement to accept Moscow's date for beginning SALT, this move might be read as over-eagerness to negotiate with the USSR. Coming before the President's speech on Vietnam, it might be read as the collapse of the President's strategy of refusing to talk seriously with the Soviets on matters of concern to them until they were willing to be helpful on the problem of greatest concern to us--Vietnam.

SECRET/HODIS

DECLASSIFIED
 Authority E012955
 By ~~W~~NARA Date 5/6/03

SECRET/NODIS

-2-

B. Con.

1. The Sisco formula is so heavily conditioned that it asks of the Soviets at least as much as it gives. The US would record its position formally only in return for serious Soviet concessions.
2. Moscow would have every reason to judge that the US is simply trying to shore up its position with the Arabs with words while continuing to back Israel's position with hardware. It could explain Mrs. Meir's satisfaction with her visit here only by assuming that we have bought Israeli acquiescence in this move by promising economic and military support.
3. The Soviets could not read this move exclusively in the Lebanese context. We have been hinting at it since Joe Sisco went to Moscow in July. In fact, we have explicitly talked of a timetable which related the move to the Israeli election.
4. In measuring the trade-off between Vietnam and the Middle East, it is not at all clear how Moscow judges its position in the Mid-East relative to ours. If they are sensitive to their inability to get Nasser's territory back--especially if they regard them as their chief entrance into the area--they would hardly consider our move enough of a concession to justify their paying a price in Vietnam; it asks them to pay a perhaps impossible price in Cairo.

C. Conclusion. My personal view is that:

1. This formula is so hedged that Moscow is not likely to accept it. Therefore, it is not likely to be seen as a major concession.
2. Moscow has little reason to believe that the US will deliver Israel. That would be the only US move comparable to Soviet pressure in Hanoi or Cairo. Anything short of that is likely to be regarded as more diplomatic jockeying.

II. Would this move improve the US position in the Mid-East?

A. Pro.

1. It is essential to the US position in the Mid-East

SECRET/NODIS

DECLASSIFIED
Authority E012955
By WPNARA Date 5/6/02

SECRET/NODIS

-3-

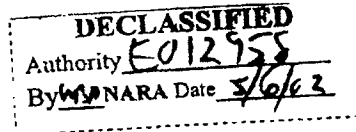
to take a position more consistent with US interests. As it is, we are Israel's lawyer and are becoming increasingly tied to Israel. That is a reversal of our policy to try to maintain as broadly based a position as possible in the area.

2. The Sisco formula would position us where we ought to be--holding out for Israel's security but not for Israel's expansion. As it is now, we are holding out for Israel's freedom to negotiate for major changes in its borders.
3. If the Soviets responded positively, there would be some chance of getting a negotiation started, although our agreement would require hard selling in Cairo and Jerusalem.
4. The alternative, however, is a continuing impasse. That will work to US disadvantage. The present situation in Lebanon is an example of how the radicals will use the Israeli issue as a cover for attacking the moderate governments.
5. If the Soviets responded negatively, we would have a clearer picture of their intent. As long as we stick to our present position, we will not know whether an agreement is possible.
6. While the Israelis will not like this move, we would still be in a defensible position with the Jewish community as long as we hold out for Israeli security.

B. Con.

1. The Israelis argue that this move would undercut their negotiating position. They have a point because they would like to change their borders in both the Sinai and the West Bank.
2. Since the Israelis are likely to reject any agreement we reach with the USSR, why risk arousing the friends of Israel against the Administration--especially at a time when it has some chance of quieting their opposition to its Vietnam policy?
3. This move will not improve the US position with the Arabs markedly as long as we continue to supply arms to Israel.

SECRET/NODIS

SECRET/NODIS

-4-

4. The radicalization of the Arab world seems inevitable. Why risk our relationship with our last friend in the area, Israel?
5. Odds are less than even that the USSR will accept our proposition. We will then be tempted to make a further concession.

C. Conclusion. My personal view is that:

1. Our present position supports Israel with an almost blank check. We are on the verge through our military and economic aid commitments--as well as our diplomatic position--of slipping into a major shift in our Mid-East policy. It is not in the US interest to make that shift and tie our Mid-East strategy exclusively to Israel.
2. Regardless of whether it produces peace, the US position in the Mid-East should be consistent with US interests. Israel's security--but not Israel's expansion--is one of those interests but not the only one. With judicious briefing, the Administration should be able to defend a stand on US interests as long as it can claim to be holding out for Israel's security.
3. The tide is running against the US in the Mid-East, perhaps irreversibly. But with a settlement, the US would still have a competitive chance to turn the tide. Without, almost none. The US cannot afford not to make any reasonable effort to achieve a settlement. Until the US at least takes a stand on the terms of a settlement consistent with its own interests, the US cannot claim to have made a reasonable effort.
4. No one can argue decisively that this move would affect the situation in Lebanon or that a few days one way or the other would make a crucial difference. But it is clear that US ability to influence developments in the Arab world--insofar as it can have any--will depend on the US taking a stand that moderate Arabs can at least regard as fair. Until that step is taken, contingency planning on Lebanon, for instance, is a meaningless exercise. As the President told Prince Fahd, we recognize that friendship with the US is today a liability in the Arab world.

cc: H. Sonnenfeldt 10/29/69

SECRET/NODIS

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

SECRETJOINT US-USSR WORKING PAPERFUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

Israel and the UAR,

In consideration of their obligations under the Charter of the United Nations,

Confirming their obligations under Security Council Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967 and expressing their readiness to implement it in good faith in all of its provisions,

Recognizing the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by means of war,

Recognizing also the need to establish a just and lasting peace in the Middle East under the terms of which each State in this area can live in security,

Agree that their representatives under the auspices of Ambassador Jarring will follow the procedures the parties utilized at Rhodes in 1949 to work out without delay, starting on the basis of the following provisions, a final and reciprocally binding accord on ways of implementing Security Council Resolution 242 of November 22, 1967 to establish a just and lasting peace.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

Authority E.O. 12958
By R.T. NARA Date 10-28-01

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

SECRET

- 2 -

Point 1

The parties, in reaching a final accord (contained in a final document or documents) on a package settlement on the basis of these Fundamental Principles, would determine a timetable and procedures for withdrawal of Israeli armed forces from UAR territory occupied during the conflict of 1967 to boundaries to be delineated in accordance with Point 3 as well as an agreed plan for interrelated fulfillment of all other provisions of Security Council Resolution 242.

Point 2

The state of war and belligerency between Israel and the UAR would be terminated and a formal state of peace would be established between them, and both parties would refrain from acts inconsistent with the state of peace and the cessation of the state of war.

In particular:

1. No aggressive action by the armed and other forces -- land, sea, or air -- of either party would be undertaken or threatened against the people or the armed forces of the other.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

Authority E.O. 12958By RT NARA Date 10-28-01

SECRET

- 3 -

2. Both parties would undertake to do all in their power to ensure that acts of hostility and belligerency whether by government agencies, personnel, or private persons or organizations will not originate from and are not committed from within their respective territory.

3. Both parties would refrain from intervening directly or indirectly in each other's domestic affairs for any political, economic, or other reasons.

4. Both parties would confirm that in their relations with each other, they will be guided by the principles contained in Article 2, paragraphs 3 and 4 of the UN Charter.

Point 3

The parties would agree on the location of the secure and recognized boundary between them, which would be shown on a map or maps approved by the parties which would become part of the final accord. In the context of peace, including inter alia agreement between the parties on the establishment of demilitarized zones, on practical security arrangements in the Sharm al-Shaykh area for guaranteeing freedom of navigation through the Strait of Tiran, and on practical security arrangements

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

Authority E072958
By RJ, NARA Date 10-28-04

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

SECRET

- 4 -

and final disposition of Gaza, the former international boundary between Egypt and the mandated territory of Palestine would become the secure and recognized boundary between Israel and the UAR.

Point 4

For the purpose of ensuring the territorial inviolability of the parties and guaranteeing the security of the recognized boundary, the parties, following the procedures set forth in the last preambular paragraph of this document, would work out an agreement on:

- (a) Zones to be demilitarized and procedures for ensuring their demilitarization;
- (b) Practical security arrangements in the Sharm al-Shaykh area to assure freedom of navigation through the Strait of Tiran; and
- (c) Practical security arrangements for and final disposition of Gaza.

Point 5

The parties would agree and the Security Council would reaffirm:

- (a) That the Strait of Tiran is an international waterway; and
- (b) That the principle of free navigation for vessels of all countries, including Israel, applies to the Strait of Tiran and the Gulf of Agaba.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

Authority E0-12958
By RJ NARA Date 10-28-01

SECRET

- 5 -

Point 6

The UAR would affirm that, in its exercise of sovereignty over the Suez Canal, the ships of all nations, including Israel, will have the right of freedom of navigation without discrimination or interference.

Point 7

The parties would agree to abide by the terms of a just settlement of the refugee problem as agreed upon in the final accord between Jordan and Israel, and to participate as Ambassador Jarring may deem desirable in working out the terms of said settlement.

It would be understood that the accord between the UAR and Israel would be paralleled by an accord between Jordan and Israel, which would include agreement on a just solution of the refugee problem. Implementation of both accords would begin only after agreement had been achieved on the entire package.

Point 8

The UAR and Israel would mutually agree to respect and acknowledge each other's sovereignty,

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

Authority E0-12958
By R.T. NARA Date 10-28-04

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

SECRET

- 6 -

territorial integrity, inviolability and political independence and each other's right to live in peace within secure and recognized borders free from threats or acts of force.

Point 9

The final accord would be recorded in a document which is to be signed by the parties and immediately deposited with the UN. After the parties have deposited such a document, the Secretary General of the UN would be requested by the parties immediately to inform the Security Council and all UN Member States to that effect.

From the moment of deposit, the document would become binding on the parties and irrevocable, and implementation and observance by the parties of the provisions of the accord would begin. In the implementation of the final accord, it would be understood by the parties that their respective obligations would be reciprocal and interdependent. The final accord would provide that a material breach of that accord by one of the parties shall entitle the other to invoke the breach as a ground for suspending its performance in whole or in part which shall be cured.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

Authority E.O. 12958
By R.T. NARA Date 10-08-01

REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

SECRET

- 7 -

Point 10

Both parties would agree that the final accord would be submitted to the Security Council for its endorsement.

* * * * *

It would be understood that France, the United Kingdom, the United States and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics would submit and support an appropriate Security Council resolution and pledge that they would concert their future efforts to help the parties abide by all of the provisions of the final accord or accords.

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

Authority EO 12958
By P.J. NARA Date 10-28-01