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~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~ [redacted]

WASHINGTON SPECIAL ACTIONS GROUP MEETING

November 2, 1973

Time and Place: 10:27 a.m. - 11:35 a.m., White House Situation Room

Subject: Middle East; Vietnam and Cambodia

Participants:

Chairman Henry A. Kissinger

CIA William Colby

\*\* Samuel Hoskinson

State Kenneth Rush

\* William Christinson

\*\* Joseph Sisco

\* Arthur Hummel

NSC Gen. Brent Scowcroft

Robert McCloskey

\*\* Harold Saunders

Defense William Clements

\* William Stearman

Robert C. Hill

\* Lt. Col. Stukel

Jeanne W. Davis

JCS Adm. Thomas H. Moorer

V/Adm.\* John P. Weinell

\*Attended only portion on Vietnam

\*\*Attended only portion on Middle East

(See separate Summaries of Conclusions for Middle East and for Vietnam and Cambodia)

~~TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE~~ [redacted]

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SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

Middle East

It was agreed that:

...an SR-71 mission should be flown as soon as the weather clears;

...the sealift of equipment to Israel should continue;

...regularly scheduled deliveries to Israel of two F-4's a month should resume in November; the 38 F-4's they received in the emergency should be considered as replacement of battle losses and will not be counted against the previously agreed total;

...the President's message on the oil emergency will be redrafted to eliminate mention of the Middle East situation and of any numbers; it should be cast in terms of U. S. energy needs and the steps being taken to meet them.

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TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE [REDACTED]-Middle East

(Prior to the arrival of Secretary Kissinger, the WSAG members discussed events at the dinner the previous evening for Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir: her behaviour toward the Secretary, the negative tone of her remarks, the Secretary's remarks, etc. Secretary Kissinger joined the conversation on his arrival.)

Secretary Kissinger: We did not go through four weeks of agony here to be hostage to a nation of two and a half million people. US foreign policy will be determined by the United States, not by Israel. They deliberately misled us at least twice: when they told us that their troops, who moved to surround the Israeli 3rd Army, were moving north to cut the Israeli road and when (Foreign Minister) Eban told us in Tel Aviv that they had accepted the ceasefire because their military told them they had nothing much more to gain.

But now we are in the catbird seat. Everyone is coming to us on their knees begging us for a settlement. We can reduce Soviet influence in the area and can get the oil embargo raised if we can deliver a moderate program, and we are going to do it. If not, the Arabs will be driven back to the Soviets, the oil will be lost, we will have the whole world against us, and there will not be one UN vote for us. We must prove to the Arabs that they are better off dealing with us on a moderate program than dealing with the Russians on a radical program. We are going to head it our way now, one way or another. And we need the support of everyone here, but there must be no talking about it. If we can't do this with the agreement of the Israelis, we will do it without their agreement. For your information, but not for debriefing, we have worked out a moderate program with the Egyptians in which Israel is being paid for stopping something they had no right to do in the first instance. We have Egyptian assurances that no military supplies will be shipped to the 3rd Army and the prisoners will be released if Israel moves back to the October 22 line. We can't have a confrontation with the Soviets over this. We will enforce such a move. If the Israelis refuse, we will get the WSAG together and look at the various pressures we can exert. But we must have total discipline on this. The Israelis even know the things I say in my staff meetings.

Mr. Clements: Right now the key to the Saudis are the Egyptians.

Secretary Kissinger: I agree. The Egyptians will help with the Saudis if we can now do something. Golda (Prime Minister Meir) ripped it last night. Now I'm going to tell her what they have to do. I'm going to let her stew a little but I will see her again, possibly around 8:00 p.m. If she threatens to resign--well, she's no great asset.

Mr. Sisco: I agree, except that the alternative might be more hawkish. But she can't look ahead at all.

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Secretary Kissinger: No alternative could be more hawkish than she is. They have been asking for direct negotiations for 30 years. When we got them direct negotiations, they say they won't negotiate. I said in my staff meeting that the Soviets can give hardware but we can give territory. The Israelis have always said they would give territory.

Mr. Rush: You also said that to the oil companies. It was in the open.

Secretary Kissinger: There was never any question that Israel would give up some territory in a peace settlement. The only question was how much, and I have very carefully avoided saying how much. It's just as well the situation crystallized last night.

Mr. Clements: Jim (Schlesinger) and I are supposed to see her at 5:00 p.m. today. Should we see her?

Secretary Kissinger: Yes, but be brutal. I'll call you before your meeting.

Mr. Colby: [redacted]

Secretary Kissinger: [redacted]

Mr. Colby: [redacted]

Secretary Kissinger: Not yet, but they should know that they are a dealing with a unified government. It would be better if you all would be to the right of me--be tougher than I am. Then I can play the good guy.

Mr. Clements: We can play that role.

Secretary Kissinger: I need a situation where there is no incentive to undermine me because all the other Cabinet people are rougher than I. Don't cut anything back yet. Keep it flowing, but tell her there will be consequences if they don't cooperate.

Mr. Rush: We also need to have the Congress playing the same game.

Secretary Kissinger: There's no chance of getting the Congress on board, but we're working to get the leadership lined up. I've been talking to (Senators) Stennis and Javits. Our position is reasonable. The Israelis have to learn that we are going to go our own way, and there will be a brawl if they take us on.

Now we mustn't carry this too far. We don't want the Soviets to believe they have a free shot. If they see us separating too much from Israel, the Soviets might act as scavengers as they did in 1956. We must keep our pressures low key.

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Bill (Clements), you and Jim (Schlesinger) can put it on the basis of what Tom (Moorer) reported from the dinner last night. You can tell her there is a sense of outrage in the US Government. I'll call you both on a conference call.

Mr. Colby: Did she thank the President?

Secretary Kissinger: She expressed no appreciation at all during the dinner. She didn't talk to me. She made her speech, claiming that Israel's friends had deprived her of victory, then sat down, without any toast. I made my remarks and sat down, then said to her "I guess there will be no toasts at this dinner unless you make one." She got up, toasted the President, then sat down again. Then I returned the toast.

Mr. Colby: Did she express appreciation in her private meeting with the President?

Mr. Saunders: She thanked him at the beginning.

Secretary Kissinger: She thanked him, but the basic thrust of her conversation was that they wouldn't budge on anything, including any permutations.

Adm. Moorer: They're going to get the Russians right back in.

Secretary Kissinger: No they won't, because we won't let them. We did what we have done in the last few weeks to get the United States in the driver's seat in the Middle East. We took tremendous risks and we are going to get the benefit from them. We didn't do these things to be the captive of Israel. We can break the oil embargo if we can deliver something moderate. Joe (Sisco), do you agree?

Mr. Sisco: Yes, we're in a good position. This trip you are taking is one of the most critical trips in history.

Secretary Kissinger: This is the opportunity we have been waiting for; we will not be deflected.

Mr. Clements: (To Secretary Kissinger) You have never been on a more important trip.

Secretary Kissinger: Okay, let's have about 15 more minutes, then talk about Cambodia. (to Mr. McCloskey) Will you see Walter Cronkite? (to Mr. Colby) Let's have your briefing.

Mr. Colby briefed from the text at Tab A, ✓

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Secretary Kissinger: We have a message from the Egyptians saying the Israelis fired a 25 kilometer-range tv-guided missile, possibly a Walleye, at one of their rocket sites. Did we know this?

Mr. Colby: We had no report of that.

Adm. Moorer: It would be a Walleye.

Secretary Kissinger: [redacted]

Mr. Colby: No, but they may have been on their way to embarcation points.

Secretary Kissinger: Did you fly an SR-71 today?

Adm. Moorer: We were delayed 24 hours by the weather. There was total overcast. We'll go as soon as it clears.

Secretary Kissinger: It would be helpful if it could go before my trip, or if I could have a read-out during the trip.

Adm. Moorer: We'll get it to you.

Secretary Kissinger: [redacted]

Mr. Colby: [redacted]

Secretary Kissinger: [redacted]

(Commenting on reports of Soviet military forces in the Middle East) You can't assess the importance of Soviet organized combat forces in the Middle East only in terms of their military capability. Their very presence will tip the diplomatic balance in the area whether they ever fight or not. It's a question of who will be thought to have brought about the situation. If the Soviets get the credit, that would be very bad. Even if they are never in combat, this would be very dangerous development. They would be a major, permanent factor.

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Adm. Moorer: (to Secretary Kissinger) If you get there before anything happens, it will be much more difficult for them to make a move.

Secretary Kissinger: The sealift should go forward with a bulge, if possible.

Adm. Moorer: It is. We have six ships at sea now--there will be a total of 12 ships.

Secretary Kissinger: Keep them going. A slowdown now would produce a confrontation. We can use this to paralyze the pro-Jewish Senators. No Arabs are complaining now. What about Israel's long-term requirements?

Mr. Clements: We're waiting on you for a decision. We have an evaluation team in Israel now confirming their losses in various categories. They are running into some lack of cooperation--the Israelis aren't being entirely forthcoming, and we'll talk to (Prime Minister) Golda (Meir) about that today. Our team will establish the par value of a reasonable number of Israel losses--in tanks, for example, we are thinking about replacing 300 tanks.

Secretary Kissinger: They claim we're replacing only 200.

Mr. Clements: They don't know because we haven't hit on the par number yet. Once we have that established, the replacement items will go forward on the sealift. Assuming the number is 350, beyond that figure we would need confirmation of their net losses. They must be proved by photography, ground inspection, etc.

Secretary Kissinger: Fine. But you'll establish some par figures?

Mr. Clements: Yes.

Secretary Kissinger: On the F-4s, let's continue with the two a month that we had already agreed to starting in November. The 38 we have given them won't be counted. That way we won't have to make a new decision--all hell breaks loose every time there is a new decision. We will count the two we delivered in October.

Mr. Clements: So they will end with 40 F-4s.

Secretary Kissinger: We will count the two in October as part of the regular deliveries. The 38 will not be counted against that total--they will be considered as replacements for battle losses. Then let's go ahead with the two a month starting in November.

Mr. Sisco: We'll just continue the regular schedule.

Mr. Colby: [REDACTED]

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Secretary Kissinger: [redacted]

Mr. Rush: [redacted]

Secretary Kissinger: I'll talk about that tomorrow.

Mr. Colby: [redacted]

Mr. Sisco: They know about those. It has been in the paper and they were talking about it last night. I talked to General Yariv (of the Prime Minister's office) last night. He's the smartest of the lot. Should I see him today?

Secretary Kissinger: No, not until I have talked with the Prime Minister. It's essential that you all be tougher than I.

Mr. Clements: We're doing things exactly as I have told you. If you have made any other agreements, let us know.

Secretary Kissinger: I'll review all the notes of all the conversations and I'll call you before 5:00 p. m.

Mr. Colby: [redacted]

Secretary Kissinger: Let's wait. We'll know more about their attitude by Sunday. I don't want to ruffle them on the peripheral stuff as long as there's a chance of getting the important things.

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Mr. Colby: [redacted]

Secretary Kissinger: Can we turn to the oil emergency? I understand that has deteriorated into a proliferation of meetings--there were 55 people at the last one.

Mr. Clements: It was horrible.

Secretary Kissinger: It has now been decided that the President will put it out next week. Will that hurt or help if it happens just as I arrive in Cairo?

Mr. Clements: I don't like the latest draft. I've cautioned (Governor John) Love that we shouldn't use all those numbers. That would be alarming.

Secretary Kissinger: Are the numbers still in the message? They have to come out. (to Gen. Scowcroft) We have to get that cut down. You see to it.

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Mr. Clements: It just gives the Arabs the ammunition to come back to us.

Secretary Kissinger: If we can get it cleaned up, should we put it out next Tuesday ~~or hold it?~~

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Mr. Clements: We shouldn't get it confused with your visit.

Secretary Kissinger: Should we wait a week?

Mr. Rush: (Saudi Petroleum Minister) Yamani told (Ambassador) Akins that one of the reasons for their actions on oil was to show the US that they will have to turn to other sources of energy. They can pump half the oil at twice the price.

Secretary Kissinger: No, that wasn't why they did it.

Mr. Rush: But it's true that we do have to turn to other sources. If we don't put the message out now, but wait until you come back from your trip, it will look as though the trip was a failure. We should talk about the worldwide energy shortage and how we intend to meet it.

Secretary Kissinger: Let's set up a committee to rewrite the message--Bill (Clements), Joe (Sisco) and Hal (Saunders)--let's do it today.

Mr. Sisco: It should be very low-key--to meet our energy needs, we are taking the following steps.

Secretary Kissinger: Yes, there should be no mention of the Middle East, no numbers. We'll get the latest draft, rewrite it here so there will be no jurisdictional disputes, then Scowcroft can ram it down their throats. We'll put it out Tuesday. Scowcroft will monitor it.

Mr. Sisco: I've talked with the best Arabists in the (State) Department, and they feel strongly we should go on Tuesday.

Secretary Kissinger: But there will be no cracks at the Arabs.

Mr. Clements: Absolutely.

Mr. Rush: It's not retaliatory--we're just meeting an economic need.

Mr. Clements: (to Secretary Kissinger) Did you see that report from Germany that they are going to announce rationing today or tomorrow--they're reaching for a 12% cut in consumption, but they can't do it.

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Mr. Rush: Ken Jamieson (of Exxon) is pushing them.

Secretary Kissinger: I thought we told Jamieson to shut up and not to panic people.

Mr. Clements: I don't know whether he is there on his own initiative or whether the Germans asked him to come over.

Mr. Rush: He was already planning to go to Europe. That's why he wanted to shift his appointment with you (Mr. Kissinger).

Secretary Kissinger: The last thing we need right now is for someone to panic.

Mr. Clements: That's why I'm telling you.

Secretary Kissinger: Rationing in Germany won't make any difference.

Mr. Clements: It certainly won't help Henry (Kissinger) for the Germans to panic.

Secretary Kissinger: (to Mr. Rush) Will you call Jamieson and tell him to cool it.

Mr. Rush: I'd better call (Ambassador) Hillenbrand first and get the facts.

Secretary Kissinger: I thought we had agreed everyone could stay cool for two weeks.

Mr. Clements: We did. This will cause a chain reaction in Europe that couldn't be more detrimental to your trip.

Secretary Kissinger: This will just create domestic pressure in those countries to put the squeeze on Israel. Then the Arab incentive to deal with us will go down. Ken (Rush), get hold of Jamieson immediately.

Mr. Rush: I will.

Vietnam and Cambodia

(Messrs Sisco, Hoskinson and Saunders left the meeting. Messrs Hummel, Christenson, Stearman and Col. Stuckel joined the meeting.)

Mr. Colby briefed from the text at Tab B.

Secretary Kissinger: (referring to a news story which had been handed into the meeting) How did George Sherman know there was a WSAG on Vietnam today? That must have come from Defense. This isn't helpful.

Secretary Kissinger: (referring to a report in the briefing that the SVN 1st Division Commander had been replaced) Wasn't the 1st Division fellow pretty good?

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