

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

Mr. Muhammad Hafez Ismail, Egyptian  
Presidential Adviser for National Security  
Affairs  
Ambassador Jamal-al-din Barakat, Presi-  
dential Office  
Dr. Abd-al-Hadi Makhluf, Mr. Ismail's Chef  
de Cabinet  
Mr. Ahnrad Mahir al Sayyid, Mr. Ismail's  
Staff  
Mr. Ihab Said Wahba, Mr. Ismail's Staff  
  
Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Assistant to the  
President for National Security Affairs  
Mr. Alfred L. (Roy) Atherton, Deputy Assistant  
Secretary of State for Near Eastern and  
South Asian Affairs  
Mr. Harold H. Saunders, NSC Senior Staff  
Mr. Peter W. Rodman, NSC Staff  
Miss Irene G. Derus, Notetaker

PLACE:

Moulin St. Fargeau  
Rocheport, France

DATE AND TIME:

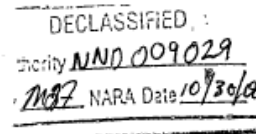
Sunday, May 20, 1973  
10:15 a.m. - 3:20 p.m.

[The group first gathered in the living room of the house for coffee and light conversation. They adjourned to the meeting room about 10:35 a.m. and the meeting began.]

Dr. Kissinger: I don't know who is technically the host at this meeting.

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Mr. Ismail: I probably am. So I wish to welcome you again on the second round of talks. I think you know everybody around the table here on our part.

And I would like to say how much impressed I was during our last meeting, the very good spirit that you have shown, and the frankness with which we exchanged ideas. I would like to also confirm our position with respect to the secrecy of our meetings, of what goes on during our contacts, in spite of the fact that more and more people are becoming a party of these discussions.

We believe that this second meeting of ours confirms that both parties are interested in continuing these contacts and these discussions. We feel at least on our side that they are very useful. I have told the Soviets about this meeting, and I have told Mr. Pompidou, and I think, if I understand him well, I believe he would like to know something about the outcome of this meeting. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Spain told me also about his preparedness to put us in contact as much as we want.

I think it would be useful, if you agree, that before we start our series of talks that we go through very quickly what we have achieved before, our evaluation of positions, so that we know exactly where we are and probably to find a way to proceed from that point onwards. I am sure that this meeting also will be conducted in the same relaxed and frank and sincere way, with the same objective of seeing how we can reach a solution of the armed conflict in the Middle East.

Dr. Kissinger: Mr. Ismail, first let me say what a personal pleasure it is for me to see you again. I also enjoyed our talks last time. I think we both recognize that we have an extremely difficult problem. We wouldn't be here if the problems weren't extremely difficult. And since they haven't found a solution for 25 years they aren't going to yield very readily.

On the other hand, we established this contact because I think there is a sincere desire on both sides to make a serious effort to see what could be done. I thought in our talks last time we spoke openly and with the attitude, on both sides, that there is no point promising something that could not be delivered, but what is promised must be done. This has been the context from which we have approached it.

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I agree that it may be useful to summarize where we are, how we evaluated work since then.

If I may make one observation. It isn't directly relevant to the subject of our discussion but has something to do with the mood. I have noticed from the comments from the Egyptian side saying that the seeming coincidence of the announcement of alleged decisions to give planes to Israel and your visit was psychologically very unfortunate. I must say I understand your attitude in this respect. First I would like to make clear to you that there was no American governmental announcement to that effect. What happened was that some officials leaked what they thought were decisions to the newspapers, which then made a sensation out of it, which then when read in Cairo had to make the impression that shortly after your visit a formal announcement was made, and this had complicating aspects for you. I want you to understand how this came about.

Now then about the decision such as it was. You know we have a military relationship with Israel; that was clear when you saw us. Unfortunately we have always put it in the context of a very definite time period, with the result that every two years there was a Wagnerian confrontation which then leads to a great announcement, where if it was just continued in the normal way no one would pay any attention to it. The numbers talked about now are less than the rate at which it has been supplied in the past. Our belief has been we should make our influence felt with respect to those aspects of our relationship only if there is something concrete to talk about rather than in the abstract. I want to assure you in the context of these talks there is no attempt to exert pressure on Egypt. If we wanted to exert pressure on Egypt we wouldn't conduct these talks. I was sorry there was these newspaper stories. We cannot control what our press is doing, as recent events have clearly proved.

I think we should also talk at some point about not only what we will say to the French to whom we owe some brief summary because we are meeting on their ground -- I think we can agree on that -- but also what we say to other countries, just as we did at our last meeting. And thirdly, we should say a word about how to maintain the secrecy of these talks. Because, as I told you, it is sometimes difficult if some of our people hear things from others they haven't heard from us. Our representative in Cairo gets morally extremely outraged, but we will discuss that before we break up.

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The major thing to say now is that we recognize that we are dealing with an extremely difficult problem. We are here with the intention of exploring with you as candidly as we can what possibilities either side sees, what either side can do, and to continue our discussions in the same spirit as last time.

Ismail: If you would allow me to say a few words about our last meeting. First I would like to say a few words about our last meeting. First I would like to say that we went to the United States from a position of independence and a nationalist pace. Egypt is not tied by any commitment to any foreign powers. Egypt wanted sincerely to explore how to achieve peace in the Middle East, within the general context of an Arab settlement, hoping that during 1973 we might be able to really do some serious work and see major development and progress.

On the other hand we approach the U.S. as a superpower, responsible for peace in general, a power having immense interests in the Middle East and very special and very strong ties with a number of countries in that area. We believe that when we met last time there were circumstances, international and regional, which to a great extent encouraged us to hope for a breakthrough in the Middle East crisis, and circumstances which would allow the U.S. to play, not a role but a very big role in bringing about that peace. Because we believe that the U.S. is an important factor, if not a decisive one, in the handling of this Middle East crisis.

I have spoken to the President of the United States and I have spoken to you and we have conducted very long discussions. I have spoken to the Secretary of State. I came out with the impression that the President is intent on a settlement but he sees a very long way to accomplish that dream. He affirms Egyptian sovereignty, and this is a very positive, very constructive approach to the Egyptian problem. Of course on the other hand, he sees the needs and the concerns of the Israeli security. He wants the United States to contribute towards the solution of the problem. However, he has said also in his report to Congress, he doesn't know exactly what useful role the United States can play. During my discussions with you, Dr. Kissinger, I came out with the impression that Egypt was required to make a new approach to the problem, to present something that will help the United States to go to Israel and say "Look here, you have got to move." In spite of the fact that, on several times and on several occasions, you have made the reservation that even with such a new Egyptian position you are not sure about the acceptance of Israel to withdraw to Egyptian international frontiers, not only that but to start moving even from the east side of the Suez Canal.

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I have found during our talks and later in the messages exchanged between us, a hesitancy with respect to the role to be played by the White House, if any. You were not still decided whether you would take over that problem or leave it to the State Department to handle it. That is to say that the White House has not yet decided to put its weight behind the development of the peace efforts.

While Mrs. Meir was in Washington after my visit, and we don't know exactly what went on, I understand again from the messages exchanged between us that you had been in contact with the other parties. You had been discussing. But of course we have no exact information about the contents of these discussions and the results. Therefore we have tried to read through certain declarations and statements made by Israeli officials, Israeli leaders, and I must say that there was big disappointment on the part of Egypt. Even the last statement made by General Dayan a few days ago -- we thought he might be a hope -- but he is a member of government, a responsible leader, and his words are usually well read and understood and immediately followed in the Israeli circles. We saw a roundtable discussion in which a few generals, chiefs of staff took part, in them; they spoke about peace and they spoke about the future, and we have come with the impression that Israel is not interested in peace, is not interested in solving the present armed conflict with the Arabs. There was nothing in the declarations and statements to say whether they are prepared to make a major move this year or not, whether they find any encouragement or whether they have different ideas from what we have expressed to you last time about how to handle the whole thing -- an Egyptian settlement within that general context, approached with an open face.

Therefore one would think it fair enough to stand here and to see, is the Israeli attitude positive or negative? Because if it is negative, then our course will be different. If it is positive then we can start talking.

I don't know about your impressions, Dr. Kissinger. I remember I sent to you saying that if we are talking about our second round, I am under the impression that -- first the White House is determined how to take over this problem.

Kissinger: You are going to shake my friend Mr. Atherton to the very core. He will never be the same after this.

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make such a statement, and that it does not reflect agreement between the U.S. and Israel. It does not necessarily reflect disagreement. But you cannot necessarily draw the conclusion.

In fact, I would say that to the extent the Israelis know you are so sensitive to what they say and to the extent they believe you blame us for their statement, you will give them incentive to make intransigent statements. I told you last time and I shall always maintain, there is no position better for the Israelis than the one they now have, in their conception; therefore the incentive to move from the east bank of the Canal is not overwhelming, and therefore if they know that you will blame us for every statement they make, and to the extent that they are afraid you and we will have general talks, you will, with all candor, really support their strategy if you react against us for their statements.

Now I know that there was an attitude in Egypt that after Mrs. Meir was in Washington this was followed by one intransigent Israeli statement, and therefore this meant the Americans are not honest with you. But I tell you also the opposite might be true. These statements were as much directed at us as at you, and they were a warning to us not to go too far; and if there was the by-product that they would also infuriate you, so much the better. Now therefore what I tell you here our policy is, that you should assume is our policy. If now two weeks after we leave here you hear something contrary from Jerusalem, that is between you and Israel, not between you and I. And I think we ought to understand that clearly.

Now what has been our general attitude in our talks with Israel? Last time you told me it was up to me how to conduct talks with the Israelis. You did not see how to make a judgment, how to handle that correctly. I have followed that guidance, and I have therefore kept the Israelis informed in a general way of the fact of the conversation but not in great detail. The reason I am not giving them any great detail was there isn't a great deal to give them, and because of something that I tried to point out to you last time and I would like to do today. From a psychological point of view it is easy to make general statements-- not easy, but possible to make general statements -- but I believe that one of the reasons there has not been more progress... There are many reasons, but one of them is that there has been too much of a tendency to make general statements that were then unrelated to any action that might be taken. I have tried to avoid a theoretical debate with the Israelis. I have tried to avoid a situation where this whole set of pressures which can be generated begins to move in a

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context in which nothing concrete can be achieved.

I cannot at this point tell you precisely what is the Israelis' attitude toward peace. I will give you my assessment. My assessment is first that they have an election this year, which is an overwhelming fact of life. You mentioned Dayan. My impression is that the Israeli Cabinet is composed of members half of whom think they ought to be Prime Minister and some of whom are engaged in a struggle for succession. Not one, but the five or six possible candidates for succession are consistently shifting positions. Sometime they move to the right of Mrs. Meir, sometime to the left; sometimes I am told by my friends in the State Department Dayan is the hope for peace; sometimes he makes the most intransigent statements. But I think many of the things are seen in terms of the election campaign. Secondly, it is not inconceivable to me that the Israelis won't say anything concrete because no one wants to take the responsibility of saying anything concrete until the process of negotiation is advanced.

So their attitude towards me has been a theoretical willingness to have negotiations, but I cannot say in good conscience that they have said yes, they are willing to make peace with the Egyptian conception of peace.

But I also believe that perhaps one shouldn't put it in this way. Because the question is whether enough points of convergence can be discovered or developed which will enable some movement to start, and it may be much easier for outside countries to make their influence felt in the context of a movement that is going on than in the context of an abstract discussion of nature of security and so forth. I believe that Israel will not be able to refuse, and in fact will not refuse, some significant steps in the direction that we discussed last time. I do not have the impression that Israel will agree in advance of negotiations to the whole program that you outlined last time. You asked me about my impression of the Israeli attitude. But I must also tell you in all candor that I would not put the whole details to them because I did not want to start an enormous debate until our discussions had advanced further.

So whether the Israelis' attitude is positive or negative it is hard to say in the abstract. I think with some influence it can be made positive. But then the question is, in what context and towards what direction?

Now we have also had some talks with the Soviets; so have you. But they have been confined mostly to generalities up to now.

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Ismail: And secondly I felt to have the impression that there was an encouragement on the part of the reactions of the Israeli side to our talks, and therefore you saw fit that we might be able to get together and continue our dialogue. I would like to say here before I continue that it has taken us a few months, and a number of years probably, to link up with the White House. We believe this is a major step, and we would keep that line of contact in any circumstances, not only through messages exchanged but even through personal contacts and things like that.

So how do you see, Dr. Kissinger, Israeli attitudes? Are they interested in peace? And if so, are they interested to make some move this year? Are they aware of our discussions, some of the outline of what we have been talking about? Are they interested to go along those lines? Well, I will be very much obliged to...

Kissinger: Let me make a general observation on the problem and first on our relations since our meeting, and then specifically on the questions which you raise, and then also on what may be meant by White House role in it.

I think we both of us agreed last time that we had had unusually frank and open discussions and we established a relationship of some confidence in each other's bonafide approaches, and I think the exchanges we have had since then have been business-like. I have one concern, which I want to put to your mind openly and I have put it also in a message to you. With the growing talk of the imminence of some military action.

One can only look at these talks between us from two points of view -- one as a means of making some progress and the other as finding some villain for the breakdown of the talks. And as I told you in a message, I have no excessive desire to be used as the scapegoat for Egyptian frustrations. And it is conceivable that at some point you may decide, because we are not making any progress, you assume no progress is possible at all. If a military action took place after our meeting, in this context, or any other context, that of course would inspire a certain caution, quite honestly in this matter. So I would like to have some understanding with you what it is all about here. Because it is, after all, possible that with the best intentions we can't make the progress we want. I want to say if we can insulate this channel from whatever other measure you may plan to take... That is one concern.

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And some of the reports I've heard which your Arab friends, especially the Saudis, tell of the accounts that were given from the Egyptian side of our meetings, seem to me to create an attitude of confrontation which we frankly did not feel at our last meeting. So this has been one concern.

Secondly, as I told you last time, when you say White House role, what exactly does that mean? In a sense every major diplomatic move is approved by the White House. But there are different levels at which it can be exercised: There are some matters that we have not only approved personally but conducted personally such as the Vietnam negotiations, Chinese negotiations and more or less most of the Soviet negotiations. That is one level of the White House -- personal negotiations by me. Another level of the White House is that the negotiations are conducted by someone else but under generally close White House supervision and Presidential supervision. And I told you last time, between these two it is very difficult to choose, because of the availability of time. Or a combination of both, that is to say, you and I could meet, set the main lines and then have somebody else negotiate the details so they would work. The third could be to just adopt a general supervisory role without very active participation.

As the President has pointed out, we are very seriously interested in a Middle East settlement and, therefore, there will be a major White House interest in one of the first two means I have mentioned -- either a personal interest, or partly involved, or through a combination of both; that is, where you and I would meet to establish guidelines, then they would be channeled into the talks.

Then the question is, what do we mean by an American role and what can we do? I have the impression that on your side you have an exaggerated idea of the degree of influence in the short term that we can have with Israel and the degree to which American policies and Israeli policies are synchronized. You spoke about public statements of the Israeli leaders following our talks. I have not followed these statements in any great detail, to be honest, because I think life is too short to follow them in that much detail. They were certainly not based on any discussions they had with us or on any discussions Mrs. Meir had in Washington.

I have not yet read the Dayan speech to which you referred. I finally did read the Eban speech which was mentioned in some public declarations. I don't want really to comment on individual Israeli statements, except that it is really important for you to understand that we do not synchronize our public positions, that we have no advance information when the Israelis

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Ismail: I would like first to say that we are not in search of a scapegoat; or that we have a predetermined plan or that our meetings do represent a part of that plan, or that we are trapping the White House or the United States. That would be too subtle for us. But I would like on the other hand to give you our general evaluation. We see the situation first that the Israelis are not willing to make any move towards peace, whether it is on account of the coming elections or whether it is a long-term policy. This has got still to be seen. The general impression in Cairo is that we tend to consider the second line of that thought as part of Israel the more dominant. The U.S. we still see hesitant. Of course it could not escape our notice the certain developments which took place during March and April and the early days or few weeks of May.

Kissinger: Which?

Ismail: Political and military. You mentioned -- you spoke about the deliveries. We see the deliveries extending through '74, '75 very revealing. We see the technological assistance to be given by the U.S. to the military industry of Israel a very dangerous policy. Because it means that maybe in a couple of years' time the U.S. can restrict its deliveries but Israel at that time will be able to maintain its balance of force and then the U.S. will come and say we cannot influence Israeli policy.

We say how much pressure has been brought to bear on the Soviet Union. I'm not defending the Soviet Union. I am not speaking in their name. But such pressure ... although you will say, of course, this is the Congress. I accept that. But you see the difficulty of the U.S. playing a big role, I mean to the extent that the immediate interests of the U.S. are subjected to Israeli policy. But on the other hand U.S. also is responsible as an Administration if under pressure of Congress you ask the Soviets to facilitate the emigration, whatever that emigration might be in numbers or quality, but to finance on the part of the U.S. -- to finance to about \$50 million this emigration -- is a very dangerous policy. That is \$1,000 a head, over \$1,300, \$1,400 per head, to finance the settlement of the immigrants not inside what might be called Israel but inside Arab territory at the expense of the U.S. To go directly to the Security Council because Israel raided Beirut, one of the most outrageous raids in the civilized world, and for the U.S. to stand up and almost threaten everybody by using a veto if there is any condemnation of that act. We have expressed sorrow about the Khartoum business for example. If the U.S. wants to condemn the Palestinians for their acts, this can be done on the spur of the moment, but to balance Israeli acts with Palestinian acts is a most unfair line of policy on the part of the US.

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Where does Egypt stand? As we tried to explain last time we have given everything we can within the text and the spirit of the Security Council's Resolution -- which we do not consider as a joke and cannot consider as a joke. We never considered this a joke. Within Security Council Resolution 242, we have gone to accept to enter into a peace agreement with Israel. This is the first time in almost a quarter of a century that an Arab Head of State takes a decision to be prepared to enter into a peace agreement with Israel.

How do we see the situation? In order to reach a solution to the problem, Egypt has one of two alternatives leading to the same result -- either to accept an interim agreement, which will most certainly become a final one because Egypt will not have any factors that could be employed to keep up the momentum of the whole business. Or to accept what we are talking about, some kind of a final solution but with enormous concessions on the part of Egypt.

Egypt has no declared policy and undeclared policy; Egypt has always had one kind of policy. It is not in the intention of Egypt and of the leadership of Egypt to accept something and to present it to its people as an achievement. If it is sovereignty it has got to be full sovereignty; if it is half sovereignty, we shall tell our people it is half sovereignty. But we cannot get half sovereignty and tell our people it is full sovereignty. We have no intention to play that game with our people, or with our Arab neighbors and friends and allies. Because for a very long time Egypt has always been on the side of these peoples, and has fought with them, and has contributed to the fight for their independence at the expense of its own, and has always helped towards their social and economic development at the expense of its own resources.

So if this is not the solution that Egypt wants, what is left for her? To accept status quo? Or to go to war? I don't call it war; it is not war. We have been in a state of war for 25 years. As I said to you in Washington the ceasefire is a burden to everybody, even to the Israelis themselves. There will come a point when we say that whatever positions we have offered are in the past tense, and have no meaning. If every time we step forward -- I think we should follow the Vietnamese example -- every time we think this is going to be the last step, and we take it and find that we are still in the middle of that morass, it is very frustrating.

Kissinger: You are too human to be able to follow the Vietnamese example. Would you like to take a few minutes break? Or, were you finished?

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Ismail: Yes. Well, it is about an hour since we started. What time do you want to have lunch? I think Mrs. Trone would be interested to know because they bring in the lunch from the village.

Kissinger: Let us say at 1:30 because I should leave around 3:00. Are you finished? Let me make an observation. Then perhaps we should take a five minute break and resume.

First, I really understand what you are saying. I don't say this to be polite. You face a really difficult dilemma -- that negotiations as you have conceived them do not seem to be progressing, and the prospects of war have their own, or resumption of hostilities, have their own complexities. And I really understand the dilemma in which you find yourself.

Now you keep mentioning the Vietnam situation, but it is different to some extent, at least as far as the U.S. is concerned. In Vietnam we were engaged with our own military forces, and while I like you more than my Vietnamese counterparts I was in a better position vis-a-vis my Vietnamese counterparts because I could deliver on any promise I would make. It probably is much more frustrating for you because I have to be more tentative. We don't have our own forces there.

And you have pointed out our domestic situation. We are subjected now with a Congressional situation regarding relations with the Soviet Union -- leaving you aside -- that is totally against the policy of the Administration. I you see my press conference statements in the last weeks, I have consistently pointed out that the pressure from these groups runs contrary to American foreign policy. The MFN for the Soviet Union is part of the context of U.S.-Soviet relations; it has to be seen in the whole context of the policy and one cannot pick it out and make it subject to additional conditions. I have said this publicly on three occasions in the last three weeks. I pointed this out to you because this is not directed to the Middle East; this has been an important part of our whole policy to the Soviet Union. I can say absolutely you are totally wrong. It cannot be in our interest six weeks before Brezhnev comes to the United States to have the Congress generate pressures on what has to be clearly Soviet domestic legislation; it is very tough to accept for a major country.

I point this out so that you don't think, when we discuss these Congressional and public pressures to which we are exposed, that we are inventing these obstacles. They exist quite apart from the Arab-Israeli issue. But to pretend these didn't exist might be good in this room but would lead to a totally useless result.

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Now as far as our immediate case is concerned, I agree with you that there are two possible approaches: that is, one is the interim approach and the general. The difficulty with the interim approach, as you correctly point out, is the danger from your point of view that it might lead to a permanent de facto settlement. The danger of a general approach is that it could become so protracted and lead to so many deadlocks that it could be used to sanctify the present status quo. The point must be reached, if the status quo along the Canal is protracted indefinitely... A point will be reached where that will develop its own -- it will simply become a part of the international landscape to which people have become accustomed. So that is the argument for getting some movement, because wherever the new movement will be, the advantage is that it will at least be new.

Now on this issue I have talked to the Israelis, and I have made clear to them that in any interim solution -- I know you don't like the word, but let me use our ritualistic term...

Ismail: We hope you will discuss it in your talks between Mr. Rogers or Mr. Sisco.

Kissinger: [to Atherton]: You can take that back to the State Department. [to Mr. Ismail]: Mr. Atherton and I have an understanding that for these purposes he is on my staff and he does not do any reporting that I don't do.

Now we will certainly make it very clear, and make it publicly clear, and we have told the Israelis we would make it publicly clear, that as part of say a Suez settlement the U.S. would not consider that in any sense a final settlement; that it is not intended in any way as a new de facto boundary but rather as a step towards a final peace settlement on other boundaries. And we would be prepared publicly to ask the government of Israel to make a similar declaration. Now this may not meet your basic concern, but I want you to know that it at least is an attempt to indicate that we have understood this problem. And probably we could get such a declaration from the government of Israel in that context. And we could insist, and I think we could succeed, in getting such a declaration made publicly, regardless of whether the entire agreement is public or confidential.

Now with respect to the general settlement, as I said to you last time, we recognize that the overwhelming concern of Egypt has to be in a general settlement and that any other solution from an Egyptian point of view has to be a stage, at best, towards a general settlement. And the question is how do we get to the general settlement.

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I was much impressed by the basic conception which Mr. Ismail advanced last time of general "heads of agreement" which could then be followed immediately by a discussion on an interim settlement and a discussion leading to a general settlement. I don't exclude this at all. The question is, how would we approach the heads of agreement and what content would they have? That would really be the key to this approach.

Let me give you my frank opinion; then perhaps we should take a break. If the heads of agreement are extremely specific, that will lead to an immediate deadlock. If the heads of agreement are phrased like Security Council Resolution 242, that is, consistent with the basic position of the parties but leaving some room for interpretation, then I think they might contain a fruitful approach. I don't want to mislead you. The fruitfulness of the approach consists of the fact that both parties will probably interpret them somewhat differently. There is no sense deluding ourselves on this. But they would then get a process started which would enable other countries to inject themselves in the process. And I would have thought, quite honestly, that from your point of view it was in your interest to get movement started backward from the Suez Canal in the context of, first, this public U.S. declaration which I mentioned, with a similar Israeli declaration, and in connection with some principles that are consistent with your position. There is no line as natural as that of the Suez Canal, and it would seem to me that once the movement started it would be easier to keep it going, contrary to what you have described.

Now I have some questions I want to ask you about the Palestinian part of your presentation last time, and the content of peace. But I wanted to make this general observation in response to your statements and to show you that we have done something about our discussions last time. If you think we should take a break now -- or would you like to respond?

Ismail: Yes, we take a break.

Kissinger: Good.

Ismail: You are accustomed to much longer sessions. I must say but when you have the translation you can sort of wander.

Kissinger: You see if you make a big effort I will make a big effort!

Ismail: We are asking you for a big effort, and I stop there.

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[The meeting broke at 11:50 a.m. and resumed at 12:13 p.m.]

Ismael: You said you had some questions about the Palestinians, or shall we put them aside?

Kissinger: Let us put that aside and see whether we can continue.

Ismael: Well, Dr. Kissinger, you have spoken about what we decided to call the interim agreement and your thinking about the linkage between such an agreement and the final one, and the need to have heads of agreement as flexible to permit a certain range of discussion and interpretation. I would say that such flexible wording of heads of agreement can land us in exactly the same grounds as 242 -- the difference of interpretation, and five years of continuous effort to interpret it. It does not go even as far as the one Mr. Rusk and Mr. Rogers had back in '68 or '69. I know it is more than three of four years later, but I don't see why more specific heads of agreement cannot be reached. And, therefore, the general wording of a declaration made by the U.S., with all due respect to the integrity and the determination of the U.S., cannot be satisfactory to the Government of Egypt.

Kissinger: Even if it were adopted by the Israelis also?

Ismael: Well, it does not differ much from what is being said at the present time. But then I must say that we are still determined to see if there is a way out of the dilemma. We do not accept this as a stalemate or as a final word, as a "goodbye and see you next year."

Kissinger: No, no, nor do we.

Ismael: Of course, probably that might have been in the back of our minds when we thought that maybe the Security Council can help us -- help us and help you too, if the U.S. wanted helping. That is why we talk about asking the Secretary-General and his Special Representative to prepare their report about what has been going on in the past few years and let the Security Council discuss the whole problem again. You know well that the Middle East question has always been a problem unique in its belonging to the UN. It started in the UN and still is. We did not take that decision on the spur of the moment because of the Lebanese situation, but back in February when I went round to Moscow, and when I came to New York, I saw both representatives in the UN, the Secretary-General and his Special Representative. I told them about our round of talks with the Soviet Union and with the U.S. and I said we had our eye on the Security Council if our efforts did not materialize. It is a step that we are taking in earnest to seek a way towards

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a solution of the problem. We are not going there to put anybody -- to corner anybody, or to embarrass anybody. We are not going there to quarrel with anybody, or to embarrass anybody. We are not going there to quarrel with anybody, but just to discuss in the most objective and constructive way how to proceed.

So the problem has always been to find an interpretation as a basis for a start, an interpretation of 242. Of course we understand that the U.S., being the most important factor in the Security Council, and outside it also, is determined as far as the development of the discussion will proceed.... Therefore, we are asking the U.S. to be forthcoming in the next discussions. If we concede on this point, that the U.S. is in search of, as you said once I think last time, of a moral basis to approach the Israelis and tell them "Well, now you have got to make some serious thinking" -- if U.S. cannot do that by itself, can the Security Council, if it reaches some resolution -- not instead of 242 but interpreting 242 -- can this help in facilitating the task of U.S. in approaching Israel?

There are two possibilities. Maybe the Israelis would say, "It is all right. In the Security Council now things are becoming difficult. Let us work along those lines, those directives." On the other hand, they might start to be more difficult. Then comes a second step by the U.S., because we think that the Security Council and any Security Council resolution is only half the way, takes us half the way. We believe that it will be up to the U.S. then to carry on for the next half; that is to say, to deliver Israel.

One would say that the most important factor encouraging Israel to stay put is the interpretation and execution and implementation of the U.S. policy of balance of power in the area. We consider this as the most important stumbling block in front of reaching a solution. As long as Israel feels itself capable of maintaining its positions along the present lines, we honestly do not believe that it will withdraw. I can only quote Mr. Sisco here when he says "I think one thing that you ought to find reassuring is that our assessment in terms of the balance and the Israeli assessment in terms of the balance is agreed in one important respect, namely that the balance is being maintained, which means that Israeli security is not in jeopardy, that the Arabs are in no position to dislodge the Israelis from leaving the occupied territory; therefore we are satisfied the balance is being maintained."

Kissinger: Where did he say this? In what context?

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Ismail: In his speech in Baltimore.

Kissinger: That is why I never make public speeches.

Ismail: It makes life easier. You see, so the U.S. is at the present time committed to defending Israeli conquests until such a time that the Arabs concede to the Israelis' demands. Therefore as you said, there is nothing to force the Israelis to take any step towards any move or any move towards a peaceful solution, a reasonable and balanced solution that takes care of the reasonable interests of everybody. So as I said, it is not only a question of a provision of the most complicated, most sophisticated armament which some people say that even American allies don't get; it is also that question of industrial capacity, and our concern that in a couple of years Israel will defy any approach towards peace. On top of that, one does not exclude the fact that enormous data about political and technical aspects of the employment of atomic weapons are being forwarded to Israel.

Kissinger: From where?

Ismail: From the United States.

Kissinger: Seriously, do you mean officially or from private sources? No, seriously, what do you think?

Ismail: I don't know. I don't know. People in the State Department sometime say that even Israel has not been encouraged to join the Non-Proliferation Treaty of Atomic Weapons. I think it came even from the Rand studies in California. I don't want to go into different aspects of the alliance between the United States and Israel concerning the intelligence, political and military. But you see unless -- as I said last time -- unless there is a kind of a parity, from our point of view there would be no possible acceptable solution. We thought that after July '72 with the withdrawal of the Soviet military elements from Egypt, to correspond with and to respond to such a move the United States might start a new approach to this question of balance of power not desirable up to now.

So, to summarize this point, I am saying that yet we are interested, very interested in a political solution or a peaceful solution to the problem. We see the Israelis blocking the road towards such a solution. Therefore we think that if in the Security Council some resolution is passed that takes care of the differences of opinion between the two countries with respect to the interpretation of 242; secondly, if the U.S. is prepared to introduce a major shift in its policy of balance of power in the area, in this way we may

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be able to get along and see some positive results. I would like to listen to your comments on how you see the interpretation of the situation, Dr. Kissinger.

Kissinger: As I said before, I understand the problem which you face. What I am not sure about is your approach to solving it, to be quite candid.

First, let us talk about the issue of resumption of hostilities. Now I have read a great deal of speculation that you should do what the Vietnamese did, and get military action started to create a condition that will force negotiation. First, I don't think the desert lends itself to the kind of warfare that the Vietnamese fought. All of military history indicates that battles in the desert are short and decisive, more like naval battles than land battles, while the Vietnamese strategy is a protracted sort of a war in which no decisive battles were fought. So there is one objective difference, in the sense that from World War II on every battle in your area was short, and that is likely to be the outcome of a resumption of hostilities again. Second, the Vietnamese did not really get what they wanted in these negotiations. For three and a half years, they were telling us that the people we were supporting in the South had to be overthrown and they would discuss nothing until they were overthrown; then they had to settle for keeping them in office. So there the outcome was a sort of compromise. We let them keep their troops there, but they had to keep our friends there. Perhaps in two or three years it will start again, but that is a different issue.

So I would think the Vietnamese analogy is not a happy one for Egypt.

Second, in the diplomacy that is now going on, it is getting extremely confused. There is a Security Council meeting; there is U.S. - Soviet talks where the Soviets are talking to us about the Middle East, and our bilateral talks, all going on more or less simultaneously and without any overriding design. Now the Security Council is handled by us right now in a normal bureaucratic way, in which I assume any resolution that deviates in any way from 242 will be vetoed. That is my assessment of the situation. I have not even addressed the situation in any great detail.

The U.S. - Soviet talks.... I have been frankly waiting for our talks. So that essentially, if we agree with you we have no particular reason to make a separate arrangement with the Soviets. If we disagree with you we won't make an arrangement with the Soviets on the issues where we don't agree with you. There is no chance. The only interest we would have in a

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separate Soviet arrangement is one in which we separate ourselves to some extent from the Israelis and the Soviets separate themselves to some extent from you. There is no interest for us to make a deal with the Soviets. I said to Gromyko when I was in Moscow, "If the Soviets have exactly the same position Egypt has, then either we agree with both or neither." If the Soviet Union has a different position than Egypt, that is then between you and the Soviet Union and then the position becomes complicated. So this is how I assess where we now stand.

In terms of our dealings with the Israelis, there is no nuclear cooperation going on between us and the Israelis of any kind, and if you have any information of anything going on let us know and we will stop it immediately, and if you have concrete information of something illegal going on. I don't know what information you have. We have urged them to join the Non-Proliferation Treaty, on many occasions and officially.

Now on the question of the degree of our cooperation with Israel: We do not agree that Israel should stay in occupation of Arab territory, but we do believe that the final borders should emerge from a negotiation, direct or indirect, between Arabs and Israelis rather than have us write out the whole details of the settlement. For many years, going back to Vietnam, people said to me, "Are we totally supporting the South Vietnamese?" I said, "As soon as we have a proposition we could support we will press it, and you will see that we will separate ourselves if necessary." And last year when we finally had a proposition that we felt we could support, we very strongly urged it on the South Vietnamese. The situation isn't exactly the same in Israel but it has many similar aspects. So we are not committed. I don't know what Mr. Sisco had in mind with his speech. It was probably to some Jewish group and it was probably stated in an ambiguous way designed to appeal to that particular group. It was not a fundamental statement of U.S. policy.

That is, in fact, one respect in which I really believe the Arab attitude has helped Israel and the perpetuation of the situation. It is a lot easier for the U.S. to bring pressure in terms of an ongoing negotiation and on specific issues going on than in the context of abstract issues and formulations -- which in our view play into the hands of the perpetuation of the status quo. So it is really a misconception of our policy to believe that we want to bring about the psychological defeat of the Arabs and that we want the Arabs to yield to Israeli demands. But given the complexities of our situation we would like to get into this issue by stages.

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I frankly don't see much good that can come out of the Security Council.  
Do you, Roy?

Mr. Atherton: No.

Kissinger: I think little good and a lot of confusion. But I may be wrong and I don't have any sense from talking to other nations that they have a clear idea of what could come out of it. Do you? You have talked to others.

You spoke before of very major Egyptian efforts, or concessions, as part of a general settlement. What did you have in mind?

Ismail: Generally speaking, the move from a state of war to a state of peace.

When we speak about the Security Council we believe that the big powers have done a lot of work in the past during the Four-Party talks, that Dr. Jarring has come up with a memorandum acceptable to the big powers, that the General Assembly has endorsed the ideas of the Special Representative; that even in May the U.S. and the Soviet Union have agreed upon the Jarring mission. Of course they don't agree to the man as a likeable gentleman; they must have had in the back of their mind what he has been doing. He has not gone beyond his mandate when he proposed his memorandum. And therefore when we talk here about heads of agreement or about a declaration by the U.S. which does not go even as far as policy statements made in speeches by Secretary Rogers or in official documents presented to us and to other parties, we feel that we are being asked for a new position. If we, at the present time, have different opinions about the interpretation of the ambiguities of the Security Council Resolution, accepting the statement as suggested by Dr. Kissinger would be fixing Egyptian positions very much and making it much harder to reach what President Nixon spoke about; that is Egyptian sovereignty.

Kissinger: We stick to what President Nixon spoke about. There has been no change in our position with respect to that.

Ismail: You put it in the paper, in the declaration, that they support Egyptian sovereignty.

Kissinger: What paper are we talking about?

Ismail: You were suggesting something about an American declaration. Your draft declaration.

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Kissinger: Oh yes.

Ismail: Of course I am not discussing at the present time in detail.

Kissinger: No, I agree with it.

Ismail: I am giving very general remarks.

Kissinger: Of course.

Ismail: But this is a most important question as far as Egypt is concerned, within the context of the Egyptian settlement. Of course, if what you have proposed is subjected to our more experienced and better qualified technical assistants, they might find new elements which would have to be introduced to be a more acceptable declaration.

Kissinger: What I have proposed with respect to an interim settlement, to what an American declaration might be -- what I have said is that this is not the final border.

Ismail: Right, both as far as its linkage with the total Arab-Israeli settlement -- when I say Arab I mean the Syrian and Jordanian positions -- and secondly, when it comes to particularly Egyptian sovereignty. Egyptian international frontiers have got to be settled once and for all. Maybe it is a very complicating process -- this Security Council thing, Soviet-American discussions, Egyptian-American discussions. Of course, we do not accept an American-Soviet agreement if that agreement is not to our liking.

Kissinger: That puts us in the happy position that we may find ourselves with an agreement that both sides will reject!

Ismail: Maybe you talk about global questions. We are talking about purely Egyptian, Arab general interests and positions. We honestly believe that if the U.S. is -- possibly it is too much to ask from the U.S. -- cooperative in the Security Council, then something might be achieved. I beg to differ with you, Mr. Atherton. You see it is six years, the occupation, and we are not in Europe where things can get frozen for the next twenty-five years and to accept the Oder-Neisse or the division of Berlin.

Kissinger: The Russians think the Oder-Neisse is permanent, not just for twenty-five years.

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Ismail: No, I mean it took twenty-five years for the Germans to accept it. Maybe Herr Brandt is a much more pragmatic leader who thinks there are no final solutions.

Of course, we do not succumb to the aspirations of Israel. And we don't know honestly really why the U.S. firmly, tangibly stand beside Israel to maintain its positions in the occupied territories.

Kissinger: But that is really a misconception. We don't stand behind Israel to maintain its position in the occupied territory.

Ismail: Until there is a solution. Convinced of the right of Israel to maintain its positions and to impose new frontiers. Is it only the Israeli interest that you....

Kissinger: I think, Mr. Ismail, you would find that in an actual negotiation the American support for frontier changes would be very minimal, and that the American practical support for your conceptions, especially on the Egyptian side, would be very considerable.

Ismail: You support changes on the grounds of security arrangements?

Kissinger: I tried to explain to you last time what I thought -- our recognition of Egyptian sovereignty -- and I assured you that Israel would violently, totally oppose this part. We are not here presenting an Israeli position; we are here presenting a position that the Israelis could be forced to accept only under enormous pressure. What we tried to present to you was a recognition of Egyptian sovereignty coupled with some transitory Israeli security arrangement. You are quite right in pointing out that this might not be full sovereignty; this may not be the exercise of full sovereignty immediately. On the other hand the principle of legal sovereignty would be established immediately; there then there can be some kind of security arrangement.

In the Soviet Union the Foreign Minister asked me if we agree to one hundred percent security for Israel, would you to one hundred percent withdrawal from Egyptian territories? I could say "yes." But quite honestly, I said, "what countries in the world have one hundred percent security? We don't, the Soviet Union doesn't. But if you can do it, of course we would agree to it. If somebody can establish one hundred percent security we would agree to it. But I don't think it would advance matters because total security for one country would be total insecurity for every other country. But if it helps to think in these terms, of course..."

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What I told you last time is what I think a realistic process could involve. What we ought to find is the difference between you and us. I think it is important that we have a correct assessment of each other's position. You could say we are wrong or crazy in our assessment: that is possible. But if you assess our position to be that we want to preserve Israel's occupation of Sinai, then that is wrong. That is not our policy. Our policy is to get a process started by which the withdrawal begins and possibilities exist for using our influence on a continuation of the withdrawal. We honestly believe that the present stalemate will lead to a perpetuation of the status quo. We honestly believe that a military action will make that situation worse because our assessment is that this will not bring about a change of physical control, so at the end of that military action, which will be short, we will be back to where we are now, even under more adverse circumstances. That is our assessment.

So the difference between you and us is not that we want the Israeli position but to begin that process of withdrawal and to what extent the American role can be exercised on the negotiation. You want us to commit ourselves to your total program, publicly, immediately, in a short period of time. If I were you this is a natural, rational policy: it is not immoral or unjust or anything of the kind. We, faced with the practicalities of the situation, will try to start a process going.

Even on a Suez settlement, any frontier through Sinai is less natural, less plausible, than the Suez Canal. But even then we are prepared to say that we do not consider it the final frontier.

Now you say the objective consequences of this is to support the Israelis' desire to exact from you a change of frontier. Our evaluation is different. We have no American interest in bringing about a change of frontier. Our evaluation is that in the process of such a negotiation we would certainly meet many times and it would have a natural evolution. It is not our intention to be here -- as we said once in an exchange -- as the lawyers for any other country, any more than you are here as the satellite of any other country.

Ismail: Well, I don't think the U.S. is interested in changing frontiers if it is meaningless work. But indirectly, through what you call the practicalities of the problem, we are being led to that. What is the interest of the U.S.? I read what was included in the President's report to Congress.

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Dr. Kissinger: That wasn't characterized by great precision.

Mr. Ismail: I was fascinated by the way you projected the long-term American view of the area. I differed with you when we were speaking downstairs, when we were talking about Iran and Iraq not being part of the complex. I said I think they are a part of the game: our view is not limited by the Suez Canal. We are thinking also in terms of the whole area. We think this is the way of the American approach to the problems in the area. It is not a point of how far the Israelis will go, what kind of presence they will maintain in Sinai. Those are probably purely Israeli, as you call them, concerns. In the area, you have of course your problems in the area. Maybe the biggest problem is the Soviet Union? But you have already come to agreement with the Russians on confrontation in the area, about respect of each other's interests. Is it the direct American interest in the Gulf area? I am not taking you too far away from the Suez Canal line. But you say there is a new front being developed in the Middle East.

Such statements could not escape our attention. When some professor -- I am sorry I don't have the names and the dates -- is speaking about the Arab cartel, OPEC, the oil organization, thinking that it has got to be broken up, at the time when everybody is considering that the Arab credits in banks will be causing immense problems for the monetary system in Europe. But the most interesting was that statement made by Deputy to the Director of Emergency Preparedness Department when he spoke about the two options in front of the United States -- either to give up its dependence on Arab oil or go and occupy the area. [Kissinger laughs] He said so, didn't he?

Dr. Kissinger [to Atherton]: Who the hell is that?

Mr. Ismail: It is very unfortunate that he didn't bring in a third option of peace in that area. Because what is causing the American concern around that part of the world is not the reluctance or the acceptance of the Arabs to sell or produce oil; I think the origin of the concern is lying in our area, in the western part of the Middle East. As long as there is no peace in that area, there will continue that situation of tension there. You mentioned once to Ghorbal that the U.S. can tolerate a state of tension in the area and can take care of itself.

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Dr. Kissinger: To whom did I say that?

Mr. Ismail: Dr. Ghorbal, you remember?

Dr. Kissinger: I remember him very well but I don't remember in what context I said that.

Mr. Ismail: Anyhow probably you have in mind that Egypt for a very long time has been, in your evaluation, a stimulus driving the area against American interests. But we are not against anybody's interests in the area if they are based on voluntary cooperation. And we think that the best conditions for our Middle East will be a genuine peaceful settlement of that armed conflict, in which the U.S. participates strongly and even-handedly. We see, secondly, that this area is in need of social and economic development and that it has got the credits, it has got the possibilities for development and for progress. It does not need to depend on anybody or to be a burden to anybody, with the exception of provision of technical knowhow and the sale of capital goods. Thirdly, to limit to the greatest extent superpower or big-power, shall I call, competition around the area. Otherwise we shall live in a nightmare in that part of the world, instead of developing its possibilities of a good partnership and a healthy one.

I would like to tell you that Egypt, if frustrated through lack of peaceful solution or if defeated through military action, may fall and disintegrate. But a lot of people also will fall with it, because a lot of people around the area are so much attached, dependent on Egypt.

We believe that the U.S. carries a big responsibility -- not for the past; I mean for the future -- and will have to exert a much bigger effort. I am not quoting the Vietnamese, but you have got to exert a much bigger effort, to really lead that area towards a more prosperous future. You have more friends than enemies in that area, if there are enemies. We are not interested in standing up against the U.S., or harming it, but having the normal exchange of everything and of having as good relations as one can expect, political and economic.

We hope you can make a decision on that. Of course we expect it to be a decision on the highest level. I am telling you the honest and sincere understanding of Egypt on the present situation and of the future.

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Dr. Kissinger: And I appreciate this very much. Let me say, first of all, we don't consider Egypt an enemy or even an opponent. When one looks at the relations in the area one would have to say, in any sense of the word, Egypt would have to be a friend. We have no conflicting interests in this area. We want Egypt to be independent and strong so that it can play its normal role in the Middle East and elsewhere in the world. And nothing in its exercise of that role is inconsistent with American purposes. I think in the disposition of the oil resources of the Middle East, military occupation is such an absurd idea it shouldn't even be discussed. It has to be done on some kind of a cooperative basis between the producing nations and the consuming nations in which both parties are satisfied. In that respect Egypt, not being a major producing country, is not the country with which we have any direct difficulties anyway. So that is not at all the problem and we are prepared to make major efforts to improve our relationship with Egypt. The only issue between us right now is what can be done concretely in given time periods.

Now about our intention as far as the great power conflict in the Middle East is concerned, we are trying to reduce this to a minimum, and I think in our relations with the Soviet Union we are trying to reduce this to a point where neither side makes a major challenge to the other where both sides have an interest. We have had an arrangement, you and I, that we would keep the Soviet Union informed of the major lines of our meeting and the major developments.

We want to proceed. We come back to the basic problems. We want to improve relations with Egypt. We have made that decision. The decision we have to make now is what can we do to advance matters and in what manner? That is the only decision that needs to be made, and that is what we are here to explore with you. Even if we don't come to a full agreement right away, it would be a very unfortunate event if we started engaging in public confrontation or controversies, because I think we can narrow the distance between us consistently. And that is certainly our intention. We want to be helpful but we also want to be realistic.

I notice that lunch hour is approaching. Should we meet tomorrow, or what is your view?

Mr. Ismail: Can we meet for a quarter of an hour after lunch or half an hour?

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Dr. Kissinger: Sure. I have to leave here no later than three.

Mr. Ismail: OK. Unless Mrs. Trong has prepared for us a banquet.

Mr. Atherton: An Egyptian banquet.

Mr. Ismail: Well, I find our French meals are a banquet.

Dr. Kissinger: Why don't we resume at 2:30? I have to leave about three because I have to make a big effort this afternoon.

Mr. Ismail: I am sure that we are squeezing you in between your Vietnamese friends.

Dr. Kissinger: No, I am squeezing them in between you.

[The group broke for lunch at 1:30 p.m.]

[After luncheon Mr. Ismail and Dr. Kissinger had an extensive private conversation while walking in the garden. Dr. Kissinger's account of the private conversation follows:]

#### SUMMARY OF PRIVATE CONVERSATION

The following are points summarized by Dr. Kissinger as having been discussed between him and Hafiz Ismail in a private talk following lunch at their session on May 20, 1973:

1. Dr. Kissinger thought, "paradoxically," that more progress had been made in the private talks this time than in the talks on February 25-26. Last time, he felt that Ismail had listened with an open mind and had agreed to consider new ideas that Dr. Kissinger had advanced, but he did not appear to have realized fully the implications of what Dr. Kissinger was proposing. This time, Ismail seemed to "take aboard" more of the implications of the approach that Dr. Kissinger was discussing. Particularly, he seemed to have greater understanding of the step-by-step approach to an Egypt-Israel agreement -- the political

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reasons for it on the U.S. side and the pace at which it might proceed. Ismail even said that he surmised from Dr. Kissinger's comments that there might not be an interim agreement until 1974 and little progress on an overall agreement before 1975. Dr. Kissinger said that he felt there had been little point at this meeting in getting into the details of a possible agreement between Egypt and Israel before there was full understanding on the theory of how the U.S. and Egyptian sides were going to proceed.

2. In response to a question from Mr. Saunders, Dr. Kissinger acknowledged that Ismail must have understood the official USG rationale for an interim settlement before, but maybe he needed to hear directly from the White House an assurance that the White House would stick with the process after an interim agreement and not walk away from it, leaving the interim agreement as a final one.

3. Mr. Ismail had asked Dr. Kissinger what he thought was the most Egypt could get from Israel. Dr. Kissinger had said that he thought the most that he could foresee now Israel's giving was nominal Egyptian sovereignty in the Sinai with Israeli security positions at key points.

4. Ismail said that he could not give any commitments now; he would have to talk to Sadat. He would send word back to Dr. Kissinger within the next ten days or so, in time for the US-USSR summit. Dr. Kissinger after the meeting with Ismail acknowledged that the principal problem is with President Sadat; he may very well decide that he does not wish to engage in this process and send word that such is the case.

5. Mr. Ismail got a clearer understanding of the inter-relationship among the various diplomatic problems the U.S. faces -- particularly right now the inter-relationship between the US-USSR summit and the UN Security Council debate scheduled to begin June 4. Mr. Ismail promised that, if the debate at the UNSC went on for a couple of weeks, Egypt would be prepared to accept a proposal for adjournment before the

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US-USSR summit begins on June 18. Egypt did not want to make too much trouble for the U.S. in the Security Council. Mr. Ismail seemed to grasp better than before the complexities of the U.S. domestic situation in dealing with this problem -- one of the reasons why a step-by-step approach seems more feasible to the U.S. than a single jump to a final settlement.

6. Mr. Ismail said that Egypt would be willing to sign an agreement with Israel before Jordan or Syria. Dr. Kissinger, commenting afterward, said he was doubtful that they would make full peace effective before those other agreements were signed, however.

[The formal meeting then resumed at 3:10 p.m.]

Mr. Ismail: I think I will give you the word, Mr. Kissinger.

Dr. Kissinger: We reviewed where we stand, and Mr. Ismail and I have had an opportunity for a very frank private talk and what we are concerned about. I want to make clear that our position on the Arab-Israeli dispute is not influenced by an attempt to realize global objectives by means of local rivalries and local differences in the Middle East. If we have any bilateral problems with Egypt we will raise them with Egypt directly and not via a third country. This is important to understand what we may or may not be able to do in given circumstances.

But we remain prepared to work with you in bringing about a just solution of the Middle East difficulties, especially of the Egypt-Israeli part of them. I think Mr. Ismail and I have agreed to stay in touch with each other and to perhaps arrange another meeting, particularly after the summit, if conditions at that time are favorable. We shall certainly make every effort to do it. From our side we will try to conduct our other policies consistent with achieving the objectives we have set ourselves. And I want to express my appreciation to all our Egyptian friends, especially Mr. Ismail and the way we have been able to talk to each other.

Mr. Ismail: Thank you, Dr. Kissinger. And I would like to say that irrespective of the fact that we have not started to discuss the suggestions that we agreed to discuss, however, we had a most important and most

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useful exchange of views. And I believe that our positions, ours to you and yours to us have been clarified. You have told us about your possibilities, the extent to which you can go at the present time under present circumstances, the effort that you will have to put in and the limitations to which you can go. I have found that explanation most illuminating. And we have also expressed to you that Egypt is interested in a global solution -- a solution that includes within its framework an Egyptian settlement, that recognizes fully Egyptian sovereignty and Egyptian interests. I would like to report whatever discussions we have had to my President.

I have understood well the complexities of the situation from your point of view with respect to coming events, diplomatic and political events. As I said to you, we have no bad intentions. We would respect a meeting between President Nixon and Comrade Brezhnev, and we are prepared to take that into consideration.

As to other questions, respecting both your conducting your discussions with the Russians with respect to the Middle East and the question of the Security Council, I hope I will be able to let you know our standpoint much clearer way within the span of a week or so. I will also convey to the President our tentative agreement about a future meeting towards the end of June or beginning of July. We have agreed upon what to tell the French side. I have noted what you told me about Israeli military provocations in the area.

And I wish to thank you again for, as you said, the way we have discussed this intricate problem, and to thank you especially for the time you have given us while you are squeezing the Vietnamese! I have valued very highly our personal contacts, our personal talks, and I am sure that what we have exchanged will be of extreme importance to our President. Thank you very much.

Dr. Kissinger: I look forward very much to seeing you and your colleagues again. And you can be certain that we will remain in the spirit of seeking a solution and working within the framework of what is attainable.

Mr. Ismail: What is attainable with maximum American effort!

Dr. Kissinger: He is worse than Le Duc Tho!

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Mr. Ismail: Well, I am getting educated.

Dr. Kissinger: Your demands are worse but you are humanly easier.  
Thank you very much.

[The meeting ended at 3:20 p.m.]

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