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Authority E.O. 12958By USNARA Date 12-13-67

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

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~~EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY~~**1973-11-8, Faisal, Kissinger, Saqqaf**

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:

' Umar al-Saqqaf, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State
Peter W. Rodman, NSC Staff
James Akins, U. S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia
Isa Sabbagh, First Secretary, U. S. Embassy
Beirut (interpreter)

TIME AND DATE:

Thursday, November 8, 1973
11:03 - 11:57 p. m.

PLACE:

Dr. Kissinger's Suite
Guest House
Riyadh

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E.O. 12958, as amended, Sect. 3.5

By SP-6 / 306 / 17 Dec 06
Date 17 Apr 07Saqqaf: I don't think we have much more to say after the long discussion you had with His Majesty. You both were difficult, as far as I can see. But this was among friends. You will see results.Kissinger: I didn't think there could be an answer.Saqqaf: Secondly, there are some Americans who seem to think he is not really interested in Palestine but only in Communism and radicalism.Kissinger: Who is so stupid?Akins: Jackson said that.Saqqaf: He makes so many bad statements. He said "They can drink their oil or swim in it. We don't need it." This doesn't help.Kissinger: He's running for President.~~TOP SECRET~~ / SENSITIVE
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Sagqaf: What you said today is true -- that the so-called oil pressure will help your opponents. But what the King said....

Kissinger: Is also true.

Sagqaf: The King has never wanted to hurt the U. S. But he kept saying this for years. He said it a long time ago.

Isa: He said it to President Kennedy in 1962.

Sagqaf: He said we should let Palestinians return, and end it.

Akins: Eban told Congressmen Steele and Ryan that the boycott meant nothing, that we didn't need the oil, and that three weeks after the boycott, Saudi Arabia would be reduced to poverty.

Kissinger: That's not true.

Sagqaf: You said to me the second time I met you in State Department, "What do the Arabs want?" I said, "We're not that powerful. We can't destroy Israel. All we want to do is shake public opinion." It's in your records.

Kissinger: Exactly.

Sagqaf: What the Soviet Union gives them is only drops -- some weapons -- then they leave.

The Arabs achieved something very great. The complex of always being defeated is gone.

Kissinger: That's good.

Akins: That's very good.

Sagqaf: What Russia sent wasn't the way it was done by the U. S. They sent it by slow ships, and only small things came in planes. To punish Syria and Egypt. To show their dependence.

Kissinger: Quite frankly, Mr. Foreign Minister, you and I knew the Israelis were winning [when the ceasefire was declared].

Sagqaf: Of course. And Aly Sabry would have come in.

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Kissinger: Yes. We stopped Israel from destroying the Third Army.

Sagqaf: You helped that.

Kissinger: But if Arab radicals win with Soviet arms, you yourself would be threatened.

Sagqaf: But on this issue we are united.

Kissinger: Of course.

Sagqaf: If they win, what happens before is forgotten. I saw the people in the street; they were angry at the ceasefire. Every country's people was pushing its government to keep fighting. So we are paying for it, not Syria. When a Phantom destroys a refinery in Syria, it's we who pay for it, and Russia who gets the hard currency.

Let me tell you what Boumedienne told me. Don't write this down. Boumedienne saw Brezhnev in Moscow. Brezhnev said to him frankly, "We don't want long-term peace or long-term war. We want things to erupt, and then calm down. Now we want a ceasefire." That's what he said. So Boumedienne said: "Why tell me? I'm not fighting." Brezhnev said, "Tell Sadat." "Why should I?" said Boumedienne, "it's not my business."

You know Brezhnev is a very nervous type. He was getting up all the time, and scratching his arm. Then at one point, Boumedienne said, "We've got some money for you." Immediately Brezhnev perked up: "We want some arms," Boumedienne said. Brezhnev immediately had the money in a Soviet bank.

They want us to go this way.

Kissinger: Will you?

Sagqaf: No. There will be no Russian arms in Saudi Arabia. That's why the King was very ill yesterday. He has influenza. It's painful to him not to defend his country. But when he defends the U.S., he feels like someone standing alone. Nobody's with you. If I look with a microscope, only Rhodesia is with you. All of Africa has cut diplomatic relations. I don't know what problems you have, but we have a problem. Kenya, Ethiopia, who all had good relations with Israel, cut relations without even approaching them first. If these countries do this, how can we refuse? We were called to a meeting in Baghdad; we had to accept the decision. And once we

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[Handwritten initials]

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give our word we have to keep it.

Iraq refuses to attend the meeting. Do you know why? Because they had to accept in advance the decision to cut relations with the U. S. and nationalize companies.

What can we do? We, also, live in a crazy area.

Kissinger: We both have dilemmas.

Sagqaf: The difficult time will come not now, but later.

Kissinger: Three months from now.

Sagqaf: When we get to problems like Jersalem, moving across the Suez.

Kissinger: That's right.

Sagqaf: I understand this is the only way you can do it.

Some of them think it's all solved. I saw Sadat yesterday. He said, "It's all settled. We have diplomatic relations; the Israelis will withdraw."

Kissinger: Really?

Sagqaf: They really think that.

Kissinger: We have to have patience. The Israelis still have to understand what happened to them. They need a few weeks.

Sagqaf: And they have an election. And both sides need to learn that the other doesn't want to kill them. Now it's a vicious circle.

So we want your help. We want something we can feel.

Kissinger: If you look at what we've done in the last few weeks, it's quite a lot. And it's preparation for something more.

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Sagqaf: All those who have met you have felt you're sincere. And you don't say that what you can't do you can do. We heard this when you met King Hassan and when you met President Sadat. We heard this from Morocco, from Egypt.

Kissinger: That's interesting.

Sagqaf: We heard this from Benhima. But they were all more optimistic than they should be. They told me it was encouraging, I said, "Let's wait."

Sadat said the same thing: You were a wise man, very calm, very patient to hear, never annoyed, that you never stop anyone from talking, that you talk at the beginning about what you can do and what you can't do. But still they are Arab, thinking more than they should.

Kissinger: And Arabs are romantic anyway.

Sagqaf: Yes.

Isa: If you will permit me, this brings to mind a line of Arab poetry. A poet once said about the triangle of love, about what he was suffering: "We fell in love with Leila" -- the lover of that poet -- which is the USA. "But she was in love with someone else" -- Israel. "And yet there is a third party in love with us but we don't want her" -- the USSR.

Sagqaf: There are many sayings like this in Arabic about our relations with the U. S.

As the King said, we're friends and remain friends.

There was an Iraqi broadcast after the last OAPEC meeting. "Who can say Saudi Arabia will stop the oil? There must be something to stop oil to the West; there must be a conspiracy."

Akins: Because Saudi Arabia is a tool of the U. S.; therefore the oil boycott must be a plot to hurt Iraq.

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Kissinger: Amazing.

Sagqaf: [takes out paper] These are my talking points. I think we've covered everything in our talks:

- What Saudi Arabia wants.
- Why the U.S. helps Israel so much.
- What conditions make Israel so arrogant, so difficult.
- Why America is always silent for 25 years.

It is up to the U.S. to try to straighten out what has gone askew. When you went all-out to help the Zoinists, what did you get in return?

The Arabs are one hundred percent united on this issue, and Faisal is way out in front on this. The policy of Saudi Arabia in twenty-five years has not changed. His Majesty has constantly drawn the attention of the U.S. to this. I personally never met an American in this country without spelling it out. We urge you not to consider that our fear of Communism is a weakness on our part. Sure, we are against the Communists, but we are also against the Zionist occupation, and the occupation of the holy places.

We want to dispel the myth that there is no connection between oil and the problem in the Middle East. Some have come and reiterated this myth with some audacity. We won't be subjected to threats. We are familiar with what happened in 1962, when the U.S. was urging everybody to recognize Yemen. And we were almost alone. The Ambassador here was Hart; he subsequently realized he was wrong.

I wanted to reiterate to you and assure you that there is no desire to destroy Israel. In our country we have people who are from central Africa; the Middle East is really a kaleidoscopic region. We're not against Judaism as a religion. No Muslim can be. I could not be a good Muslim if I maligned Judaism. This isn't my personal opinion; it's in the Koran. Arab history books are replete with references to Jewish writers and scholars. We don't want the Nazi complex of hatred of the Jews to be imposed on us. Jewish poets in Arabic are taught in our schools.

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Akins: There is an Arabic saying "As faithful as Samuel."

Sagqaf: Permit me to say this. We've been so rich with promises, our political wealth is a stack of IOU's. This doesn't refer to you. You told me it before the war started; I told it to my King, and the Arabs know it. But it is an Arab saying: "I am rich, but my wealth is promises."

We hear threats in the U. S. about grain cereals. We know it's not U. S. policy.

Kissinger: We should not have a confrontation.

Sagqaf: We are against it. We are your friends. Help us.

Kissinger: We say the same thing to you. And on oil, if we don't keep our promise, we will still need the oil next year.

Sagqaf: We were watching you two from the side; we thought he [the King] lost.

Kissinger: With all due respect, Mr. Foreign Minister, that I don't believe!

Sagqaf: Another point: Detente between the great powers should not be permitted to work to the detriment of the Third World.

Kissinger: Of course. Let me assure you the Soviet Union will try to give the impression that we and they have prearranged it all. It is not true. It's a game they play.

Sagqaf: We say that to the Arabs.

I want to repeat that it's important to have contact with Syria.

Kissinger: We didn't want to be refused. But now that we understand the situation, we will reestablish contact.

Sagqaf: That's good. I will tell them. I'm going around to different capitals. They are important to Arabdom. You should see the destruction wrought there; it will cost us millions and millions of dollars.

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Akins: And the Russians couldn't possibly have produced the ceasefire, or relief of the Third Army.

Sagqaf: We're aware of that. Since Sadat became President, six months afterwards, we've been in contact. He's a wise man. He knows what he can do and cannot do.

Kissinger: He impressed me.

Sagqaf: He knows the limits. He's not ambitious. If Nasser was alive, he'd be shouting.

Kissinger: And he'd fail.

Sagqaf: Of course. The man was never normal -- he'd read a book and change his style of government completely. A semi-educated officer can't run a state.

I don't want to keep you.

Our contact, between us...

Kissinger: Let's maintain the channel. May I write you for your opinion?

Sagqaf: Of course.

Kissinger: If you see something I should know, or some thing I should not have done, please -- seriously -- tell me.

Sagqaf: I've done this on Syria.

Kissinger: That was the first time I understood their position.

Sagqaf: Do you have a copy of the agreement?

Kissinger: Yes. [Tab A]

Sagqaf: Theirs is longer.

Kissinger: This is the six points on the ceasefire. Then there are seven points on negotiation.

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Sagqaf: Yes.

The Arabs have confidence in you and therefore they have confidence that everything will come out right.

Kissinger: That may be too much. But it shows their good intentions.

Sagqaf: They said there would be negotiations in December.

Kissinger: Yes. December 8. And they wanted the Foreign Ministers. They wanted my personal presence.

Sagqaf: It's some visible movement. It's important.

No country in the Middle East can afford like Egypt to lose six million pounds every three years.

Kissinger: These six points will be announced tomorrow. The seven points will be announced about November 20.

[The meeting ended with warm handshakes. The Secretary and the Foreign Minister walked downstairs together, their arms around each other.]

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