

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Meeting with President Mubarak of Egypt
(U)

PARTICIPANTS: U.S.

The President
The Vice President
James A. Baker, Secretary of State
John H. Sununu, Chief of Staff
Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President
for National Security Affairs
Robert M. Gates, Assistant to the President
and Deputy for National Security Affairs
Frank G. Wisner, U.S. Ambassador to Egypt
John H. Kelly, Assistant Secretary of State
(NEA)
Dennis Ross, Director of Policy Planning,
Department of State
Richard N. Haass, Senior Director for Near East
and South Asian Affairs, NSC (Notetaker)

Egypt

President Mohammad Hosni Mubarak
Esmat Abdel Meguid, Deputy Prime Minister and
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Osama al Baz, First Under Secretary of the
Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Director of
the President's Cabinet for Political Affairs
El Sayed Abdel Raouf El Reedy, Egyptian Ambassador
to the U.S.

DATE, TIME October 2, 1989, 11:00 - 11:45am EDT
AND PLACE: The Oval Office

The President: It is a good day for us whenever you visit. I see you are wearing two hats, the OAU and the bilateral. I'd like to turn the floor over to you; feel free to talk about multi-national issues or the Middle East, where your role is most constructive. (U)

President Mubarak: Let's start with the Middle East. You are familiar with events since we gave the ten points to Representative Gray to deliver to Prime Minister Shamir. The substance of our message was to tell Shamir that we don't say no to elections, but that we need to clarify some issues to be able to persuade the Palestinians to go along. This was in early July; by September things began to work. I spoke to Shamir recently, making clear that my efforts were not in any way

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(S) 8/21/2009

against his but were only an explanation for Israel's initiative. I also told him that any negotiation would require the involvement of Palestinians from outside the West Bank and that we were ready to suggest good, moderate names. Shamir told me he would not be ready to respond until after Arens and Peres returned. He also asked if I can meet with them and I said of course. Shamir told me that meeting with Rabin was not enough given the split in the government. I said, "But he is in your government." I told him I've met other members of his government, and invited him to bring all the Likud ministers to Cairo. Arens said that Shamir is sensitive and that it would be an error to just use Rabin. I am afraid that to meet with Shamir without a good result would create problems with the Egyptian public. To help, I phoned Shamir to wish him a happy new year. I told him I would like to meet but that we would need thorough preparations to meet expectations. He told me he agreed. I do not want to have to face my own people without results. Arens told me that Shamir was pleased with the call. I have no sensitivity about speaking with Shamir. But he cannot just say no to everything. I am trying to help him. He raised the issue of the Saudis and whether they would enter into diplomatic relations with Israel. I told him that the Saudis are not in a state of war with either the Soviets or China but they do not even have diplomatic relations with them. Also, the Saudis are helping with the peace process, so don't ask for diplomatic relations. If we make progress, then all this would follow. (S)

The President: Was Shamir making diplomatic relations with the Saudis a condition for moving ahead? (S)

President Mubarak: No. But why even raise the Saudis? They are not the key. Shamir then raised the issue of the Iraqis. I told him they have no intention to create a problem with the Israelis or start an offensive action. By the way, Saddam Hussein told me that the Americans and the CIA are working to overthrow him. (S)

The President: He is crazy. Why would we want to do that? Tell Saddam you raised this with me and I said so. We don't have a history of close relations, but we are not out to get him. Why does he think this? (S)

General Scowcroft: If anything, we are extending a hand to Iraq. (S)

Secretary Baker: Maybe it is because we are discouraging Iraq shipping arms to Lebanon. (S)

President Mubarak: We did the same. (S)

The President: We have no beef with Hussein and we are trying to improve relations. (S)

President Mubarak: He is ready for improved relations. (S)

The President: He is more reasonable than he used to be. (Ø)

President Mubarak: I have spoken to him a lot and told him not to be a problem, and not to exert pressure on his Arab brothers. He promised me he would not. Then one day we found some Baathists in Egypt working against our government. I told him and he was furious. Saddam then told his people never to do this again against an Arab government -- except for Syria. (Ø)

The President: I want to raise a few points about the peace process, that I want you to hear from me. We think your ten points and efforts are very good. What you have done is strong and creative. Your role in moderating Arafat is useful; there is no disconnect between us here. We think we are on the threshold of a key accomplishment if we can get a dialogue launched. I like the idea of your issuing invitations to both sides. If we can help screen names, fine. We need to keep the PLO's fingerprints invisible. If there is a problem with Shamir we can reassure him that the dialogue is on the basis of the Israeli proposal. (Ø)

President Mubarak: I told him exactly this. (Ø)

The President: The ten points are not an alternative. (Ø)

President Mubarak: I said this too. (Ø)

The President: Palestinians should be able to bring the ten points to the table. Israel should also be able to bring its own points to the table. Israel will have to show flexibility on the matter of the Palestinian delegation, including one or two deportees. Shamir fears being excluded. We keep hearing this. Your call helped here but getting him to Cairo could be key. I met with both Peres and Arens -- this may have exacerbated Shamir's feelings by the way we did the Peres meeting. I always hear that I need to shore up Shamir. Again, your phone call helped and if you could invite him to Cairo it would help. (Ø)

President Mubarak: We are ready to meet with him but a meeting with no outcome would be very bad. (Ø)

The President: If there were a bad outcome, it would be bad, but there is no need to solve the whole problem if he comes. (Ø)

President Mubarak: But we need to solve at least part of the problem. Shamir needs to be flexible, to avoid saying no -- for example, on land for peace. We are trying to work with the Palestinians and we need something to work with. (Ø)

Secretary Baker: What if you could arrange a meeting in Cairo at which the question of Palestinian representation would be addressed by the US, Israel and Egypt. Would this be enough? (Ø)

President Mubarak: We could work discreetly with them on this question. (Ø)

Secretary Baker: We should not go down the ten points one by one to see which ones they accept. (Ø)

President Mubarak: I agree. What is important is that they just don't say no and don't increase our problems with the Palestinians. The Israelis need to be practical. I reminded Arens of what Dayan said, a "piece of land for a piece of peace." Right now, "peace for peace" is not practical. (Ø)

On Libya, Qadhafi is better than ever before. I am still being cautious, though. The big problem is Jallud, who gets Qadhafi upset. The latest news is that Jallud brought Iranian, Syrian and Palestinian representatives to Libya a month ago. Fortunately, Qadhafi rejected this anti-Arab coalition after I talked to him. Jallud is constantly working to upset my relationship with Qadhafi but Qadhafi is running after me now. (Ø)

The President: Why? Is he interested in you because of your OAU hat? (Ø)

President Mubarak: No. When we met in Casablanca I was frank with him. I told him you are alienating everyone with your terrorism and insults. He said that it was the first time anyone had ever spoken so frankly with him. (Ø)

The President: We have the greatest confidence in you and know you will not be taken in by Qadhafi. We are still not convinced. Don't let him get his hand in your pocket so he can steal your wallet. We always hear he wants better relations with us. (Ø)

President Mubarak: I told him he must change and stop supporting terrorism. (Ø)

The President: We have not seen this. (Ø)

Secretary Baker: Ask him why he still supports Abu Nidal. (Ø)

President Mubarak: I will. (Ø)

The President: Just meeting with you gives Qadhafi standing. This is good for him, but if you lecture him and give him direction, it is good. (Ø)

President Mubarak: I will meet him again but not in Cairo. If he behaves badly I will say so publicly. (Ø)

Mr. Al Baz: He has not moved against the PLO. (Ø)

The President: What about the Sudan? (Ø)

President Mubarak: He is acting better. (Ø)

The President: Chad? (Ø)

Mr. Al Baz: We have no illusions that he has converted but he is acting better. (Ø)

President Mubarak: In the Sudan he is doing nothing now. (Ø)

The President: If we see something, we will share it with you. I don't want to miss some opportunity, but we are still apprehensive about whether this leopard has changed his spots. (Ø)

President Mubarak: Let's give him some time; for now I am losing nothing. (Ø)

The President: How's Chadli doing? (Ø)

President Mubarak: He is fed up with Qadhafi. He is asking for my help. Sadat always spoke nicely to Qadhafi. I don't. When Qadhafi made some false claims about Sadat in Casablanca I told him to sit down and not to lecture us like students. After that I got him to shut up and just sit quietly for the meeting. (Ø)

(At that point the President and President Mubarak met for a one-on-one that lasted until about 12:15 p.m.)

Originally Processed With FOIA(s):
2000-0429-F

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Record Group/Collection: George H.W. Bush Presidential Records
Collection/Office of Origin: National Security Council
Series: Presidential Memcon Files
Subseries:

OA/ID Number: CF01729
Folder ID Number: CF01729-010

Folder Title:
[Memorandum of Conversations (Memcons) - June 1989-December 1989]: October 1989
