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MEMORANDUM

## THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

SECRET/NODIS/XGDS

## MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS:	President Ford Dr. Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State Brent Scowcroft, Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs
DATE AND TIME:	Monday, July 19, 1976 3:31 - 4:15 p.m.
PLACE:	The Oval Office

<u>Kissinger:</u> On the Middle East, I am getting the uneasy feeling the Soviets may be going for broke. The PLO delayed the convoy that was set to leave. They said they couldn't assure our security. There are only two possibilities: (a) there's a real security problem, which I don't believe, or (b) it fits into what Hussein told us. It is possible that they (the Soviets) see themselves closed out of the Middle East if the PLO gets destroyed. At the Arab League conference last week, Arafat changed his tune in the middle of the meeting, and refused to go to Syria until the Syrians withdraw from Lebanon. If Asad did that, the PLO would take over Lebanon and Asad would be overthrown. So I think we must keep the Syrians there and we may have to play tough. You may be facing your first real first-class crisis. First, I would move the fleet in to within 24 hours to give a signal to the Soviet Union.

President: Should we have an NSC?

<u>Kissinger:</u> I don't think we should do anything dramatic that would be perceived as a reaction to the cancellation of the convoy.

With your approval I would like to get Murphy back for 24 hours. I am afraid to send cables on this. I also think I should talk to Dinitz.

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President: I agree completely with that.

Kissinger: The main thing is to keep the Syrians from withdrawing.

The damned Christians won't let the airport open for us. Maybe we should have the Israelis tell the Christians they better cooperate or we will shut off their resupply.

[Discussion about general Lebanese situation and the two airfields being built in South Lebanon.]

[Discussion of the system of the NSC intermediate committees--WSAG, SRG, etc.]

At the NSC on Wednesday, we should outline the Lebanese situation.

<u>President:</u> I definitely agree. And I could say if there is a crisis we should use the WSAG.

Kissinger: We don't need a SALT meeting this week.

<u>Scowcroft:</u> I think we should, just for the President to say he wants a SALT treaty and expects everyone to focus on the national interest.

President: Let's spend about half the time on each.

<u>Kissinger:</u> I am going to the West Coast this week. I will discuss Japan and Far East policy.

[Discussed Bohemian Grove security.]

Leone is very upset about Carter saying he could live with the Communists. in the government. I think we should get the word to Carter.

<u>Scowcroft:</u> Bush is planning to brief Carter on Wednesday. He could show him the Leone cable.

<u>Kissinger:</u> Can we see the Bush briefing for Carter? And I am worried about the NID [National Intelligence Daily], which still goes up to the Hill. [Further discussion] The only other item I have is Graham Martin. [Discussed pros and cons of Senate confirmation for Martin.]

President: That is a tough one. Let me think ot over for 24 hours.

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