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**1975/12/17**

MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

SECRET/NODIS/XGDS

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

PARTICIPANTS: 3176 Abdelaziz Bouteflika, Minister of Foreign Affairs  
of Algeria

CLASSIFIED BY FRANK WISNER Mohamed Bedjaoui, Algerian Ambassador to France  
SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION  
SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652

AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT DWO Henry A. Kissinger, Secretary of State  
YEAR INTERVALS AND DECLASSIFIED ON Sabbagh, PAO, Amembassy Jidda  
DECEMBER 31, -----, Peter W. Rodman, NSC Staff *Pinz*

DATE & TIME: Wednesday, December 17, 1975  
8:05 - 9:25 a.m. (breakfast)

PLACE: American Ambassador's Residence  
41 rue du Faubourg St. Honoré  
Paris

**SECRET**

SUBJECTS: CIEC, Spanish Sahara, Angola, Middle East

[The Secretary greeted the Minister in the Blue Room.]

Kissinger: Enfant terrible!

[Photographers came in briefly, and then left. The group proceeded to the dining room.]

Kissinger: What are the most pressing problems we have to discuss?

Bouteflika: Whatever you would like.

Kissinger: [To Sabbagh] When I met him, he was a revolutionary. Now he is a revolutionary diplomat.

Bouteflika: It is necessary, during certain parts of one's life, if one is off on a tangent for a bit.

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CIEC

Kissinger: Let's talk a bit about the Conference. We can't do much about the Sahara problem, but I'd like to hear your views. Then I would like to talk on the Middle East a bit.

[Referring to Mr. Sabbagh:] He's my favorite interpreter. He has been in on every negotiation.

Bouteflika: I know him. He was the best known speaker in Arabic of the BBC during the Second World War.

Kissinger: The Conference seems to me to be going along quite well.

Bouteflika: The general discussion seems to be constructive.

Kissinger: You didn't think my speech was too aggressive.

Bouteflika: It was aggressive but not too aggressive. [Laughter]

There was some evolution from the beginning, but it is clear.

Kissinger: You have to say certain things for your audience, to be conciliatory. I have to say certain things in order to be conciliatory. It is a precondition for a conciliatory approach.

[Mr. Sabbagh translates this with an Arabic proverb: Everyone has to sing praises to his beloved.]

Bouteflika: It is more beautiful in Arabic.

Kissinger: That is my destiny.

Bouteflika: Everyone has to sing praises to his beloved.

How do you see the follow-up of the Conference, and the commissions which would be in suspense?

Kissinger: I think the commissions should start meeting in four weeks, at the end of January. I think then we will do our best to be constructive. It would help if some of the nonaligned and we stayed in contact with each other to avoid confrontations.

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Mr. Robinson is going to Nigeria in February and maybe he could go to Algeria on the way there or on the way back. We would like a positive outcome, and in fact we think a positive outcome is imperative.

Bouteflika: If the commissions have no orientation, they can only do guidelines.

Kissinger: It would be good if the guidelines were established at the beginning rather than at this Conference. Because it would be a bitter debate, and it's better if the Conference ends in an atmosphere of cooperation.

Bouteflika: Who does the guidelines?

Kissinger: The commissions themselves. The preparatory conference already set some guidelines. I am worried that in the day and a half we are here, with many Foreign Ministers leaving, it would be futile to attempt to define guidelines.

Bouteflika: I have an intermediate solution: It could be done with the two co-presidents of the Conference, and the presidents of each commission.

Kissinger: After the Conference is over?

Bouteflika: Yes.

Kissinger: That is possible. Let me think about it.

Bouteflika: Are you leaving this evening?

Kissinger: Yes. It is really impossible [to do it now]. It is really dangerous.

Bouteflika: I understand.

Kissinger: We are the co-chairman of energy.

Bouteflika: Yes. Japan is co-chairman of raw materials. The EC is on development and finance.

Kissinger: The EC has two? That shows I'm not in control. [Laughter]

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Aide: Saudi Arabia is on the commission for energy, Iran for finance, Algeria for development. Raw materials has not yet been decided.

Kissinger: Algeria is going to be impossible.

Bouteflika: The problem is between Zaire, Peru and Nigeria. It is not our problem.

Kissinger: But you are co-chairman of one. You just want everything.

But that is an area in which we have made our best proposal. So we can cooperate.

Bouteflika: Mr. Robinson is welcome. He can come.

Kissinger: Mr. Enders will be our Ambassador to Canada.

Let me think about your idea. It is not a bad idea.

Bouteflika: It is simply an idea. We are open to all suggestions.

Kissinger: No, I think it is interesting. I'll let you know during the day.

Bouteflika: In any case, Mr. Robinson is welcome.

Kissinger: We can do it early. In any case, I want him to visit Algeria.

Bouteflika: It is an opportunity and we shouldn't let it slip away.

Kissinger: That is our attitude. It was the basic theme of my speech yesterday. The practical problems we can discuss. You should contact me whenever there is a problem. Sometimes the technicians get carried away. To me it is a political and moral problem. It is in this spirit we would like to deal with it.

Bouteflika: Are there any problems which preoccupy you?

Kissinger: No, this is the only problem.

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### Spanish Sahara

Kissinger: Let's talk about the Sahara. You should know we put no pressure on Spain for any particular solution. In fact, we attempted to dissuade the King [Hassan] from marching in.

Did you hear what Moynihan said? He said if the Russians took over the Sahara, there would soon be a shortage of sand. [Laughter]

We frankly want to stay out of the Sahara question. It is not a heroic posture.

Bouteflika: I think if we want to address the problem correctly we are obliged to speak frankly, and directly. The problem of the Sahara is a precedent for the world and is a problem which is important also for the Middle East.

Kissinger: Why for the Middle East?

Bouteflika: If there is an accord between Egypt, Syria, Jordan and Israel, do you think also that the Arab world would abandon the Palestinians? It is the same problem. You can't abandon the people of Sahara, or any more the people of Namibia.

We have Morocco and Mauritania involved, and they try to settle it. Now there is a decision of the International Court of Justice.

Kissinger: It was ambiguous.

Bouteflika: No, it considered each side's brief in detail and came out for the one peaceful solution.

Kissinger: I don't know what self-determination means for the Sahara. I can understand it for the Palestinians, but it is a slightly different problem.

Bouteflika: The population of Qatar is no more important.

Kissinger: But they had a sheikh. They had an independent state.

Bouteflika: But they can be independent also. Have you been to Dubai?

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Kissinger: No. Because our security people think my reception would be too enthusiastic. They won't let me. [Laughter]

Bouteflika: I don't think either side -- those who encouraged you or those who discouraged you -- have any right to do so. They are countries that are worthy of being seen.

Kissinger: What will happen in the Sahara?

Bouteflika: I would want to see if you could give your consideration to proposing a solution, because it is important.

Kissinger: What solution?

Bouteflika: There is only one kind of solution. It is a problem of principle. There could be a referendum, and Algeria would accept the results of the referendum. If they want to be with Morocco or with Mauritania, Algeria would have no problem. Or to be independent.

Kissinger: Can the referendum take place while the Moroccans are there?

Bouteflika: There would have to be guarantees. There can't be a referendum under a bayonet. They could have done it under the Spanish, because they were leaving.

Kissinger: The Mauritians are there too. Did they split it half and half?

Bouteflika: Maybe half and half, but there are many aspects of the problem. Fishing. There is the political problem and the economic problem and the sovereignty problem.

It is absolutely excluded that Morocco follows neither the ICJ or the UNO. The Ivory Coast can't judge right. One of the judges on the ICJ said it was a question of monarchical solidarity. He told me. In The Hague.

Kissinger: One of the few international bodies which you don't dominate.

Bouteflika: It's the same for the U.S.!

Kissinger: I repeat, we have no interest in the problem, as such.

Bouteflika: But you, yourself, should look at it.

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Kissinger: Why?

Bouteflika: Because you work with great subtlety. I have to tell you frankly -- perhaps it was not by you.

Kissinger: It was done by you.

Bouteflika: Your position was one of principle, it was very clear. Your press -- Newsweek, the New York Times -- were very objective on the problem. And we find that the U.S. could have stopped the Green March. The U.S. could have stopped it, or favored it.

Kissinger: That's not true.

Bouteflika: We think on the contrary that France played a crude role. There was no delicacy, no subtlety. Bourguiba, Senghor -- they tried to use what influence remained for France. Bongo. No finesse, no research.

I don't know if this corresponds to your situation. But there are sentiments, and we were very affected because we thought it was an anti-Algerian position.

Kissinger: We don't have an anti-Algerian position. The only question was how much to invest. To prevent the Green March would have meant hurting our relations completely with Morocco, in effect an embargo.

Bouteflika: You could have done it. You could stop economic aid and military aid.

Kissinger: But that would have meant ruining our relations with Morocco completely.

Bouteflika: No. The King of Morocco would not have gone to the Soviets.

Kissinger: But we don't have that much interest in the Sahara.

Bouteflika: But you have interests in Spain, and in Morocco.

Kissinger: And in Algeria.

Bouteflika: And you favored one.

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Kissinger: I don't think we favored one side. We tried to stay out of it.

Bouteflika: Your role could never be marginal or devoid of interest because obviously there was military cooperation with Morocco, so, given that, you could not be neutral between Morocco and Algeria. So I understand you had to be, or appear to be, favoring Morocco, because of that.

Kissinger: [To Sabbagh, who is interpreting] But what the Foreign Minister complains about is that we didn't favor Algeria. To take his position, we would have had to reverse positions completely.

Bouteflika: Maybe it would have been easy to take the principle of self-determination as a starting point. Now we have a neighbor which has mobile frontiers -- with Mauritania, with Niger, and with Algeria. Moving frontiers. After 10 years. We have come to accept Mauritania in the region. If Morocco occupies it with a minimum of legality, it's a significant precedent. If in the region there is this precedent of broken frontiers, there is the risk of conflict. It's not too late for you to aid a path to a solution. It would have to have the maximum of guarantees of the UN for a referendum, and Algeria would accept it. Neither the ICJ nor the UN recognized the rights of Morocco or Mauritania.

Kissinger: Let me think about this and I'll contact you through our Ambassador.

When will you send us an Ambassador to Washington?

Bouteflika: Effectively your remark is pertinent. At the beginning of the year we will designate someone. I think sincerely that it is in our interest to pick someone appropriate. I will solve the problem very, very rapidly.

Kissinger: It would be helpful if we had someone in Washington.

Bouteflika: I want to find someone of enough stature to fit into that position.

Kissinger: He will be well-received in Washington.

Bouteflika: This is the way we think about it, Dr. Kissinger, and we have established such a wonderful rapport based on cooperation, and in the economic field we have established a tremendous cooperation that we will

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never forget. In the political field, the Middle East, Dr. Kissinger can have no complaints.

Kissinger: No, you have been very helpful.

Bouteflika: If you had a problem with Cuba or Vietnam or Cambodia, we would be very glad, discreetly....

Kissinger: Our UN people don't always understand our relationship. But I agree we have had a very positive relationship, which I have valued.

Bouteflika: I repeat and emphasize we are true friends. We have nothing to hide; we don't maneuver. Just this gesture that we are here at the table as your guests indicates it. You could have said, "Let's go off into a corner somewhere."

Kissinger: Exactly. Let me look into the question of a referendum. Especially if it doesn't require withdrawal before a referendum.

Bouteflika: Yes, you said provided withdrawal is not a factor. But it must be also provided there are enough strong guarantees that the people can decide freely. You know assassinations can be rife.

We don't want any remaining problem. Genocide.

Kissinger: In the Sahara?

Bouteflika: I'm completely positive. It is a problem of interests. I don't know why Mauritania wants frontiers like that or why Algeria has to be frightened. It is not healthy. If Morocco and Mauritania partition it, it is not politics.

Kissinger: We have not played a very active role. Because we have enough problems without taking on new ones. But I will look into it and I will be in touch.

Bouteflika: Think about it.

Kissinger: I will think about it.

Bouteflika: I don't think you want a new state in the region.

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Kissinger: If it had developed, we would have accepted it. Guineau-Bissau, Cape Verde, we have accepted.

Bouteflika: There is great wealth there. In 10 or 12 years, it will be the Kuwait of the region.

Kissinger: But we didn't oppose it. We had no particular interest.

Bouteflika: The equilibrium that we worked for in the region, it is important that it be maintained. I don't have the feeling that in the region your interests coincide with disorder.

Kissinger: I agree with you.

Bouteflika: I was astonished to see France and Tunisia working together as "Mediterranean powers." With the problems in the Middle East and Cyprus, with the problems existing in Maghreb, to speak of the Mediterranean is to be optimistic.

Kissinger: We were basically inactive. We were not doing a great deal on either side. We didn't help you, but not Morocco either.

Bouteflika: In the Middle East you have seen the situation of occupation of territory, and fait accompli, and everyone speaks of negotiations. If you speak with the Mauritians, there is no reason to defy the decision of the ICJ. There is no reason to distrust the decision of the ICJ. It was the Ivory Coast and others.

I would add this. Whatever elements favored Morocco were disintoxicated after the decision of the ICJ. It was a kind of mystification.

Kissinger: Let me think about what if anything can be done. I'll think about it. I never like to promise anything I cannot do.

Bouteflika: If you can.

#### Angola

Kissinger: Let me talk about Angola. We have no interest there whatsoever. We left it alone completely until August. What we do not want is for the Soviet Union and Cuba to establish the political order. We would settle for a withdrawal of all foreign troops and an end of all military shipments.

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In Mozambique, FRELIMO is not a friend of the US. It is Marxist.

Bouteflika: No. But on the left.

Kissinger: But we didn't oppose it and we established diplomatic relations immediately.

Bouteflika: That was a good thing.

Kissinger: And I'm even thinking of visiting there if I go to Africa.

Bouteflika: It would be a good thing also.

Kissinger: So it is not a matter of the Left. The Soviet Union has shipped 20,000 tons of military equipment. We are still willing to stay out of it. But <sup>we</sup> don't want the Soviet Union and Cuba to establish themselves. It worries us because of our relations with the Soviet Union, for them to be so active so far away, and secondly, our relations with Cuba. I had moved our relations so far. But then they were first agitating over Puerto Rico, and now Angola.

Maybe our current domestic situation will get complicated. But we'll get even somewhere.

And the curious result of our domestic situation is that every event like this drives it further to the right.

Bouteflika: I know the leaders personally. I know Neto, I know Roberto, I know Savimbi. They see that you didn't have time to establish relations with the MPLA. There are three or four divisions which think like intellectuals of the Rive Gauche or St. Germain, who think they are Marxists. They are as Marxist as the regime in Brazzaville. If Brazzaville is a great threat to the United States, then the MPLA is.

Kissinger: But that is not the problem. If the MPLA came in by itself, we could accept it. It is the Soviet role that bothers us.

Bouteflika: The Soviet role is reasoned.

Kissinger: And so is ours.

Bouteflika: And so is ours.

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Bouteflika: If you see it as a problem between the Soviet Union and the United States, it is a matter of detente, which you have done as well with China.

Kissinger: And with the Arabs.

Bouteflika: You should establish contacts with the MPLA.

Kissinger: But first the Soviet airlift has to stop.

Bouteflika: It is a struggle for power. Either the MPLA or some other movement, it is not so important. It is a matter of independence. Now there is the situation as if it is the first time for a war. It has been a long struggle. It is a civil war. Why should this put you opposite the Soviet Union? Why not establish contact with the MPLA? This would be easier than you think.

Kissinger: We can't accept the Soviet Union in the area. I have been a man of the detente.

Bouteflika: Don't put this as a problem between you and them. I speak as a friend. Don't antagonize them over this.

Kissinger: I agree. But at a time when those of us in the United States who favor detente are fighting for it, it is irresponsible of the Soviet Union to do this now, especially over secondary objectives. If it were Syria, we would understand. We don't complain about Soviet arms to Syria.

Bouteflika: The OAU Ministers are trying for a summit.

Kissinger: Why not a coalition government?

Bouteflika: It is <sup>the</sup> given in Angola. The OAU will have a summit. You should contact African capitals, by your Ambassadors or a special emissary. They will condemn the intervention of South Africa.

Kissinger: That doesn't bother me.

Bouteflika: Second, they will complain about intervention from the outside. One will ask the Africans not to make a crisis in Angola. Parallely, you have no reason to regard the MPLA as the enemy.

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Kissinger: We are open-minded about the MPLA. What we are not open-minded about is the Soviet Union. If they would come in independently like FRELIMO, there would be no problem.

Bouteflika: Can I tell them this?

Kissinger: Yes. We are not against the MPLA. We are against the Soviet Union in Africa. We are against South Africa, too. You can tell them we are not against the MPLA.

Bouteflika: Reflect on my suggestion.

Kissinger: I will.

#### Middle East

Kissinger: Let's talk about the Middle East. I explained very frankly my thinking when we met in New York. We are in a paradoxical situation. Public opinion in America is more ready to do something than ever before. But we have a period of about nine months, when we can't do everything.

The attempt of the Israelis is to create maximum commotion in the Middle East. They think we can't do much to them. That is why they bombed in Lebanon. You saw in the Herald Tribune a report that we asked them to check with us. This isn't what we asked: We said we wouldn't be responsible for the actions they took without consulting with us. That is very different. And we protested their settlements on the Golan.

Bouteflika: There is a danger to the policy of America even in that expression.

Kissinger: What do you mean?

Bouteflika: In the implication which can be drawn that all previous Israeli actions have been with American connivance.

Kissinger: No, we have never known. They never tell us ahead of time.

But that is not my major point. My major point is: They are deliberately provocative now. They established settlements; they announce

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they will never give up more than 200 meters of territory -- which is an insult to Syria, because it is Syrian territory. When Peres comes to America.... The F-15 we promised a year and a half ago -- but there was a delay because of delivery and the reassessment. Then he announced it as a new thing, as a response to Syrian MIG-25's. He did it to provoke the Arabs. It was a lie.

In the Congress, their supporters are putting in one amendment after another, directed mostly against Saudi Arabia. Why? They want a crisis this year rather than the next. They want to divide the Arabs from the US so that next year, when we have the freedom of movement, they can say, "Why do anything for these madmen?"

They want to go back to <sup>the</sup> 1967-73 period, when they were our only friend in the Middle East. They know time is running out. They can't get \$2 billion a year for many more years. And they know they can't get deliveries on what is voted this year until 1978-79. So we have all the means of pressure in our hands. That is why they are trying to undermine my authority. But that isn't the main thing.

The main thing I want to say is the Arabs should show restraint for a year. A war wouldn't be so bad for us -- we could show we are tough. The main thing is to make what little progress is possible this year, and work for next year. I say this as a friend.

Bouteflika: We are grateful.

Kissinger: Because you have practically won. You must not let yourselves be provoked. The Syrians must understand this too.

Bouteflika: You have some problems with them?

Kissinger: No. I'm afraid their pride may lead them to do something later on. I'm thinking of going there myself in March, to see my friends.

Bouteflika: The Arab capitals understand your electoral situation.

Kissinger: The Arabs have been very good up to now. What worries me is the new methods -- the boycott legislation, the anti-discrimination legislation -- may provoke them.

Bouteflika: Will they pass?

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Kissinger: I hope not. We are fighting it very hard. You can be sure I oppose it.

Routeffika: For the first time, the Palæstinians are in the Security Council. It is a good thing.

Kissinger: We voted for it.

Routeffika: You can visit the area and tour around, to gain time for the election. One must continue to speak. We don't think it is a difficult period. Algeria understands.

Kissinger: We appreciate it.

[The meeting ended]

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