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KISSINGER BRIEFING: Sept 26, 1970

6:00 P.M., EDT, SATURDAY,
SEPTEMBER 26, 1970

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BACKGROUND BRIEFING

AT THE WHITE HOUSE

WITH DR. HENRY A. KISSINGER,
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT
FOR NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

2:43 P.M. EDT

FRIDAY

SEPTEMBER 25, 1970

MR. ZIEGLER: This EACKGROUND is available for those of you, and those organizations, who will be going on the President's up-coming trip to Europe and the Mediterranean.

Dr. Kissinger will discuss this with you and also take your questions.

The groundrules are as they have been in the past: Administration officials; no direct quotations.

Q Ron, are you going to run this off and give us copies?

MR. ZIEGLER: We will run it off and make it available to those of you who will be going on the trip.

Q How soon will it be?

MR. ZIEGLER: It takes about six hours.

Q I wondered if you had an embargo on time?

MR. ZIEGLER: I am sorry. Thank you.

I should tell you that the words from Dr. Kissinger will be embargoed until 6:00 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time, Saturday; in other words, for Sunday papers.

Thank you very much.

Q You say you are going to make it available, do you mean you are going to give us copies to take away or just look at?

MR. ZIEGLER: I haven't decided that yet.

Q Can we get anything from Dr. Kissinger in connection with his trip for today's release?

MR. ZIEGLER: Yes. Anything that Dr. Kissinger covers in regards to his trip can be for immediate release.

MR. ZIEGLER: It will be on the same basis, and then I will follow up after that.

DR. KISSINGER: You will get the text as soon as we put the verbs into it. (Laughter.)

I don't have a prepared statement or an unprepared statement. I will just take your questions.

Q Dr. Kissinger, can you tell us what the President hopes to accomplish by speaking to Tito? Will this be a go-between, perhaps, in our relations with the Russians or what?

DR. KISSINGER: I don't think we need a go-between to conduct our relations with the Russians.

Let me make a general observation about the trip and then on the extended conversations that the President intends to have with President Tito on this.

The trip was really planned before the recent events underlying the urgency of the situation in the Mediterranean, and its intention was to symbolize the American commitment and interest in the Mediterranean, to talk to countries with a major stake in the area about their view of what would be most conducive to stability and peace in that area, and to explore both bilateral and multilateral relationships in the Mediterranean region.

Obviously, recent events have underlined even more the importance not only of overcoming the immediate crisis, but to bring about a situation in which these crises are less likely and in which a more permanent stability can be achieved. This applies to the Middle East.

Of course, Yugoslavia, like most of the countries in the Mediterranean, really looks in separate directions at once: they look towards Europe, they look towards the Middle East; they look East, North, West and South in a way that few other nations of the world do.

President Tito and Yugoslavia—we recognize of course that they are a Socialist country, and it is obvious that they have prized their non-aligned status over the years, and this is exactly consonant with our view of what their role should be.

Therefore, the visit to Yugoslavia, as far as we are concerned, is obviously not directed against any one. We recognize also that President Tito is in an unusual position of understanding the dynamics of the Communist countries and of having the confidence of many or most of the countries in the Middle East and, finally, of having a problem which is very similar to that of many of the countries in the region; namely, how to preserve the independence and integrity of his country in a world of very complex international rivalry.

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For all of these reasons, we believe that an exchange of views between the two Presidents is going to be very significant and very useful to us, and I think it will be helpful to President Tito in his diplomacy to understand our thinking about the international situation.

But the focus of the conversation is not going to be primarily U.S.-Soviet relationships. We are not looking to President Tito to broker our relationships with the Soviet Union. I think our relationship and our channels to the Soviet leaders are good enough that we can do that bilaterally.

But we do believe that understanding of other Socialist countries and of the world scene is going to be very useful in helping us form our own judgments about the situations which I have described.

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Q Henry, on a slightly different subject, the United Press is saying today that informed sources in Moscow were talking about the Soviet-American presence in the Middle East if the United Nations cannot supply -- I don't know how far you want me to go with the story -- that there is no United Nations force that can be brought in to guarantee the borders of the countries in the Middle East.

They say further, that they have proposed -- this is a story, a booklet put out by Novosti News today -- proposing that there be a demilitarized zone and U.N. troops on both sides of the line.

But they also say that Soviet officials have talked to American diplomats, and UPI quotes informed sources as saying this, that if that United Nations proposal doesn't work, that the scheme we have heard before, Soviet-American troops might be a possibility in the Middle East.

DR. KISSINGER: You remember that at a previous backgrounder, an unidentified spokesman who did not have an accent raised this as a possibility.

I don't want to go into specific schemes for policing any possible Mid East settlement. We have, of course, always stated that demilitarized zones should be part of an ultimate settlement, recognizing that Israel is very reluctant to permit any demilitarization on its side of the border.

So, we have not endorsed that particular proposition, but we have believed that the demilitarization of border areas, of areas contiguous to the borders, particularly the areas that were evacuated by Israeli troops, would be a useful component of the settlement.

I think it is premature to talk now about who should furnish the units for such a force. The primary requirement should be that they should be from countries which give the parties concerned a sense of security, rather than a sense of insecurity and that they should be there in a manner that does not permit a repetition of the 1967 experience that, at the moment they were most needed, they evaporated.

I think with these general principles in mind we would be prepared to engage in a discussion of the concept. The composition of the force is really a detail further down the road and that I shouldn't speculate on it today.

Q Dr. Kissinger, could you tell us a little bit about your trip to Paris? Does it indicate that you see some hope in the Viet Cong or that there has been some movement that has not met the eye.

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DR. KISSINGER: As some of you know, I have been accused of being excessively optimistic about negotiations all along. I have had occasion to point out here in these meetings before, that I believe that we will not have an excessive advance warning if a break should ever come. I have never predicted that there would be a break at any particular moment.

All I have said is that one should not conclude from the fact of the stalemate that it will be inevitably permanent.

I still believe this. As Vietnamization is making progress, we here believe that the chances of negotiation are enhanced. Now that Ambassador Bruce has been there for a month, for more than a month, now that the chief North Vietnamese negotiator has returned to Paris and attended several sessions, it is time for us to assess the trend, the trend of events.

As you know, the President is expecting to meet with Ambassador Bruce and Ambassador Habib in Ireland. I must caution you not to expect any dramatic announcements from that meeting, because it is intended to be a review of the situation as it exists at that moment in order to help decisions which the President may wish to make over the next weeks and months.

My trip is really taking advantage of the opportunity of going to Europe anyway, of stopping by in Paris and exchanging ideas with our delegates. When they come to see the President, then I will have had a somewhat better feel and have had an opportunity to talk to them at greater length than the more formal setting permits.

Do not read any great significance into this. I had intended to do this, if the occasion permitted it, for a long time. And it is not related to Madame Binh's proposal.

Q If the Jordanian situation had gotten worse, would the trip possibly have been called off?

DR. KISSINGER: That is a very speculative question. If full fighting had erupted in the Middle East, we would certainly have had to take this into account in our plan.

I think that there is a chance that it would have been called off, yes.

Q Henry, would you discuss Madame Binh's proposal with us in some detail, give us your preliminary reactions to it.

MR. ZIEGLER: Gentleman, if I could make a suggestion here. I think we would be better served if we proceeded at the outset of the briefing on subjects to do with the trip and then at the end of that, we can go for a few minutes to general questions, such as yours, Bob.

Q This seems to me it is the only substantive part of the trip.

MR. ZIEGLER: Let's proceed on that basis.

DR. KISSINGER: Can I answer his question?

MR. ZIEGLER: Yes. (Laughter).

DR. KISSINGER: I wish I didn't have to, actually. (Laughter).

Q What was it? We have forgotten it now.

DR. KISSINGER: The question was whether I would comment on Madame Binh's proposal.

The eight points of Madame Binh, in many important respects, repeat the ten points with which we are familiar. Some categories are more specific.

We are studying them with great care, because the other side has a tendency that when they want to say something, to do it in rather subtle shifts of phrases, rather than in dramatic shifts of positions. So, we are studying the proposals with great care. We will hope that over the next few weeks, we will receive further clarification.

On first reading, if I wanted to score debating points, I would have to say on first reading, there is no very great difference between the eight points and the ten points, but we are looking at it carefully for new answers to see whether they might indicate a shift of emphasis. And you can be certain that we will be exploring those. But I want to repeat, my trip is not connected with the eight points, nor are we planning any dramatic overture as a result of my trip to Paris.

Q Dr. Kissinger, what contribution can President Nixon make to peace in the Middle East by going to the Mediterranean and the Sixth Fleet?

DR. KISSINGER: The peace in the Mediterranean depends on a number of factors, some of which are outside of our direct control. There is, of course, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the solution of that conflict depends importantly on the contribution the two parties are prepared to make, and the sacrifices both sides will be prepared to make in the eventual settlement.

There are at least two important respects in which the United States role in the Mediterranean is very important: The first is that the growing Soviet Naval forces in the Mediterranean and the changes in the political situation that have occurred at the southern rim of the Mediterranean have created in the mind of our allies a rather substantial concern about the southern flank of NATO. This is not directly related now to the Middle East, but has to do with the general situation in the Mediterranean, and you are all familiar with the general concern that exists all over the world, including in Europe, that the Nixon Doctrine might mean a withdrawal by the United States into isolationism.

We have repeatedly asserted that the Nixon Doctrine is not a return to isolationism, but is rather a means by which we will remain committed to the rest of the world, and particularly, to our allies under the conditions that now exist.

Therefore, this objective of making clear that we have significant relationships in the Mediterranean is served by our visit there, first symbolically by our presence there, and secondly, substantively by the conversations we expect to have with the leaders of Italy, of Yugoslavia and of Spain. Then as you know, of course, the Secretary of Defense is going on to Greece and Turkey so that the NATO context is going to be discussed.

Secondly, as far as the Middle East is concerned, there are, as I pointed out, many elements to a possible settlement, the most important of which I have already alluded to, namely, the relationship that the two principal parties establish among each other.

But other elements are the confidence in the American willingness or ability to safeguard those elements of a settlement that we have agreed to safeguard, or take an interest in. And in this sense again, a visit to the area and the meeting which we intend to have with our Mediterranean Ambassadors, as well as to the leaders of this area, will give us, first, a sense of the components of the settlement that the principal people there want, and secondly, it will give us an opportunity to make clear what we will do to contribute to a settlement in the area. And in this manner, I think, this would be one of the building blocks for our long-term Middle East policy.

Q Henry, will the President express his concern that the other NATO powers do not at least publicly appear to be as interested in protecting the peace in the Middle East as we do in connection with the Nixon Doctrine and all of its points?

DR. KISSINGER: The President certainly intends to state his view of the importance of the Middle East in the countries which he visits. It is not his style to chide people or tell them what they ought to do, but he will certainly explain our view.

Q But is the premise of my question correct, that their role has been something less than adequate?

DR. KISSINGER: I wouldn't want to use a negative adjective on it. I would say their role has been somewhat less active than ours in the recent crisis.

Q Where will the meeting between the President and the "leaders of the area" be?

DR. KISSINGER: The itinerary has been made available, hasn't it, Ron? We will meet with the leaders in their capitals. We will meet with the U.S. Ambassadors from the Mediterranean countries in Naples.

Q The European countries only?

DR. KISSINGER: No.

MR. ZIEGLER: You have the complete itinerary. When Henry refers to the leaders, he is referring to those leaders of the countries where we are going.

Q We don't have the list of nations yet whose Ambassadors will be there.

DR. KISSINGER: I think it is all the countries bordering the Mediterranean, the Eastern Mediterranean, and it does not include our Ambassador to Yugoslavia because we are going to be in Yugoslavia; it does not include our Ambassador to Spain, because we will be there.

I will have an opportunity to see Ambassador Watson in Paris, so he will not be there. But our Ambassadors or our Charges in all the Arab countries bordering the Mediterranean will be there, and of course our Ambassador to Israel will be there.

The best thing to do is give you an exact list.

MR. ZIEGLER: We will give you that list at 4 o'clock.

Q . Henry, I think it would be of value to some of us if you could describe how the Administration views Greece, Italy and Spain as Mediterranean powers? Why are they important to the Mediterranean? What do they do?

DR. KISSINGER: For one thing, they are located in the Mediterranean. (Laughter.)

It would be hard not to call them Mediterranean powers.

Secondly, in terms of the Southern flank of NATO, the NATO Southern Headquarters is in Naples.

We have just concluded a new base agreement with Spain. It is therefore important to us for that and other reasons.

Greece, geographically, is also important in the NATO context, and also in relationship to the Middle East.

So these are countries that think of themselves as principal Mediterranean countries who take a profound interest in the changes that have occurred on the Southern shores and with which, on a bilateral basis, we have often had discussions on the situation in the Mediterranean and in the Middle East.

For example, the UAR Foreign Minister only recently visited Spain, and Spain has had a long relationship to the Arab countries. Of course, Yugoslavia's views on this matter are well known. Italy has shown a profound interest.

So both from the point of view of the security of Europe as well as from the point of view of the political evolution of the Mediterranean area, these are key countries.

Q Should we view arms shipment to Greece part of the Southern strategy, so to speak?

DR. KISSINGER: The renewal of arms shipments to Greece this week was based on the important contributions that Greece makes to the Southern flank of NATO.

The weapons that we are sending to Greece under their policy are not useful particularly for civil control. They are almost exclusively useful for defense against aggression. They are items of heavy equipment. And for that reason it seemed to us that in the present situation in the Mediterranean, and as we pointed out in the public statement accompanying it, whatever the views about some of the domestic policies, this was a measure taken into the common interest.

Q If you wanted to dramatize American concern about the Middle East, it seems to me a trip to Israel might have been appropriate for the President; and, secondly, could you assess the affect of the Jordan crisis in the last week on the overall situation there?

DR. KISSINGER: Whenever we take a trip, we have to explain why we did not visit particular countries. I think the President's visit to the Sixth Fleet makes clear that we are concerned also with the Eastern Mediterranean; and, secondly, the events of the past week have made clear what our general concern is.

Also, we would not visit Israel alone. We would visit, if such a trip were taken, also some Arab capitals and this would have made the itinerary too complex at the present moment. (Laughter.)

As for the question that you asked, what is the impact of recent events on the possibilities of the future evolution in the Middle East? If nothing happens that has not already happened, in other words, if there is no new foreign intervention or no new upheaval, then we think that the long-term prospects for the peace initiative have probably improved and for the following reasons: The structure of a peace in the Middle East, as I have pointed out before, will require on the part of Israel the giving up of some physical possessions -- we should be careful about individual words these days -- but some of the physical conquests in return for intangibles, like enhanced legitimacy in Arab eyes, promises of future performance, and similar matters.

For this to be effective, there have to be a number of components: One, there has to be confidence in the willingness of the other parties to perform on their commitment. Secondly, there has to be confidence in the ability of the other states in the area to perform on their undertakings. Thirdly, there has to be a confidence in whatever assurances the United States gives in order to safeguard the settlement.

A number of events in the Jordan situation crystalized possible doubts about many of these components. It crystalized, in conjunction with the violations of the standstill agreement, doubts about the willingness to perform on promises. To the extent that the authority of the

ability of the King of Jordan to perform or of any government to perform. And, of course, if the King of Jordan had been overthrown and a radical government had taken over, this would have then created doubts on the willingness to perform on the promises.

Finally, if all of this had happened, this increasing radicalization of the situation, without any outside action, it would have raised doubts about the American ability or willingness to safeguard any settlement that might be, or contribute to the safeguarding of any settlement that might be achieved.

The events of the last two weeks should have contributed in a number of ways. One, if a moderate government can maintain itself in Jordan that has already committed itself to the peace negotiations, and if it establishes a greater degree of control in its territory than it has had up to now, it will be better able to live up to whatever commitments it may make.

So that from that point of view, the atmosphere has somewhat improved.

Secondly, the actions that have been taken by the United States over recent weeks indicate that we at least have the ability to carry out whatever promises we may choose to make in order to safeguard such a settlement.

Finally, we can hope, and there is no proof of this yet, that all the parties in the area could have learned from the recent crisis that the continuation of the status quo can bring about totally unforeseeable events and trigger a set of actions that could get out of control unless by political means they managed to stabilize events now. So that the motive of all parties to bring about a settlement might have been strengthened.

So, I repeat, we are not out of the woods in the present crisis. There is still a possibility of outside intervention. There is still a possibility of other developments. I am saying that if nothing happens other than what has already happened, then the long-term prospects have improved.

Q What would be the agenda of the conversations in Rome? Is the President going to talk just about the recent situation or about other problems like the European Security Treaty of the Soviets? Number two, what does the President think of this demonstration staged by the Communist Party?

DR. KISSINGER: First, we don't generally announce an agenda in advance. These discussions are always fairly loose. We recognize that Italy is not only a Mediterranean country but also a part of Western Europe and we would expect and would be prepared to discuss issues not confined to the Mediterranean.

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As far as the demonstrations that the Communist Party in Italy has made, we have enough troubles worrying about our own demonstrations and we will leave it to the Italian Government to worry about theirs.

Q In view of your assessments you gave of the impact of the Jordanian situation, in that context, could you assess for us the Soviet tactics during the past week or ten days?

DR. KISSINGER: We have stated our view about the violations of the standstill that had occurred earlier and that could not have contributed to quieting the situation.

In the immediate crisis, I think it is fair to say that the Soviet Union was in the early stages relatively passive and began to become active only when the situation threatened to get out of control.

What we would welcome is a Soviet contribution before the situation threatens to get out of control rather than to let things reach such a dangerous point.

Q Could you elaborate a little on what you mean by getting active only when they began to get out of control?

DR. KISSINGER: The thing is, that we have to base our policy on what happens, not on what is said. What happened was that Syrian tanks crossed the Jordanian frontier about four or five days after the Jordanian internal conflict broke out. The Syrian army is trained and advised by Soviet technicians. We are not saying that the Soviet Union had anything to do with this. But we also cannot conclude that the Soviet Union restrained it.

All we can say is, the fact of the matter is that the Syrian army crossed the border in force. When this triggered the series of other events, then we had some indications that the cooler heads urged the Syrians perhaps not to press matters to a point of explosion.

We would have preferred if Syrian tanks had never crossed into Jordan, obviously, because if one attempts to calibrate these actions so precisely it gets very dangerous.

But whoever contributed to the Syrian retreat -- I don't want to speculate as to what made the Syrians withdraw.

Q Henry, I would like to follow that up. To what extent -- combining that with the missile violations, the general build-up in the Mediterranean by the Soviets and this announcement today that possibly they are building a submarine base in Cuba -- are we fearful generally at this time of Russian military activity increasing around the globe and, if so, is the President's trip at all related to these Russian actions?

DR. KISSINGER: No, the President's trip was basically planned before these actions occurred. It was planned after the cease fire and these violations began to be obvious, but before they became acute.

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The reasons for the Presidential trip I have essentially indicated.

As for the events that you have mentioned, they are, of course, matters which we have to look at with concern.

With respect to the Soviet naval activity in the Caribbean, we are, of course, watching the development of Soviet naval activity and of possible construction there. We are watching it very closely. The Soviet Union can be under no doubt that we would view the establishment of a strategic base in the Caribbean with the utmost seriousness.

I would like perhaps to call attention to a press conference statement that President Kennedy made on November 20, 1962, in which he said the following:

"As for our part, if all offensive weapons are removed from Cuba and kept out of the Hemisphere in the future, under adequate verification and safeguards, and if Cuba is not used for the export of aggressive Communist purposes, there will be peace in the Caribbean."

The operative part, of course, is here: "If all offensive weapons are removed from Cuba and kept out of the Hemisphere in the future."

This, of course, remains the policy of this Government.

Q Does that imply that a submarine with missiles aboard would be carrying offensive weapons and therefore ---

DR. KISSINGER: I don't want to go any further than what I have said. And I have related it to the reports to which my attention was called about the possible construction of a naval base. All I want to point out is that we are watching it and we want to see for what type of weapons it would be suitable, and similar matters.

I have stated our general view with respect to it while the activity is now in an early state.

Q Do I understand that there is some doubt that this base could accommodate Polaris Submarines?

DR. KISSINGER: I will go no further than what I have said. Obviously, a Polaris type submarine is an offensive weapon.

Q Dr. Kissinger, do you agree with the thesis that now the Russians are achieving parity in the military force with the United States around the world and also in the Mediterranean, that this will lead to peace?

DR. KISSINGER: We have trouble enough worrying about our side of the military equation. Our concern, our belief, our policy is to maintain a military establishment on the basis of the doctrine of sufficiency, and we believe that in the field of strategic weapons this is adequate to achieve the security and foreign policy objectives of the United States.

We do hope and we have made it clear to the Soviet Union in many exchanges, and we have done so in the SALT negotiations, we do hope that the two superpowers recognize their special responsibility for maintaining the peace, and also the need to recognize that both sides must be willing to subordinate possible tactical advantages for the benefit of the greater interest of humanity in peace.

This is why some of the events to which the preceding question alluded require us to study Soviet actions with particular concern.

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Q Do you expect any substantive announcements after the talks with the various leaders any place along the President's trip?

DR. KISSINGER: Our practice is not to have communiques at the end of the talks. We sometimes depart from that. But the difficulty is that an inordinate amount of time is then spent on drafting communiques and generally, the President prefers to concentrate on the substance of the talks, rather than on the drafting of communiques.

Q But you did have some announcements, I think, about cultural exchanges.

DR. KISSINGER: We had an announcement out of Romania. There was, I believe, a consular convention and a cultural agreement that were ready for signature, and which fortuitously, it wasn't planned that way, could be announced on the occasion of the President's visit.

So, we do not exclude announcements in all circumstances, but I think I am safe in saying that you should not expect world-shaking announcements out of any of the visits. This is not the purpose.

The purpose of the visit is more long range. It is to contribute to everybody's understanding of the elements of peace in the Mediterranean; to enable the President to meet the new leaders of Italy, and Great Britain, and to meet, of course, with our Paris negotiators to reassess the situation. But I can assure you there will be no announcement coming out of that meeting either.

Q Dr. Kissinger, you indicated, in speaking about Jordan, that the recent events in Jordan "prove that we at least have the ability to carry out our promises."

Could you be a bit more specific as to what promises you were referring to?

DR. KISSINGER: I am not referring to any particular promises we may have made with Jordan. I am referring to the fact that the projection of American power into the Mediterranean should have made clear that we are in a position to contribute to the safeguarding of the peace, if that should become necessary, and if that should be part of the settlement.

We are not, at this moment, necessarily committed to any particular course along that line. And to the extent that our promises are a weight in the scales, I think our performance enhanced them, our performance in the last two weeks.

Q Is the stop in London really much more than a courtesy stop?

DR. KISSINGER: No. It is a working visit. We expect to have about four hours of conversations, and we expect it to be a working visit.

Q Aside from watching the Cuban coast, have we had any representations to the Soviet Union concerning this or trying to find out what they are up to?

DR. KISSINGER: No. We are watching the situation carefully. And I will say no more about it at this moment. When we have something specific to announce or to say, we will do so. But we are not at this moment doing it. We are keeping it under careful observation.

Q Henry, what did we do in the last two weeks in order to show people where we will carry out our -- we would be able to carry out ---

DR. KISSINGER: What did we do?

Q Yes.

DR. KISSINGER: I think over the last two weeks, both in relation to the hostages and to the general situation, I don't want to list all the measures that were taken, but there has been a rather clear demonstration of what the United States could do and also a demonstration that the United States does not look with indifference at aggression in the area.

Q Dr. Kissinger, how will the Mid East figure in the President's talks with Marshall Tito, and will the President be asking Tito, in any way, to use his influence with Nasser to help solve the Mid East problem?

DR. KISSINGER: It would be difficult to have a conversation with President Tito in light of his wide ranging experience among the non-aligned countries without getting his full views on the situation and of their views and his own views on the Middle East.

We are not going to any of the countries for the purpose of asking them to do anything specific related to the tactical situation that now obtains.

Q Isn't this really an effort to sort of regain our balance after the stalling of the peace initiative and after the Jordanian crisis?

DR. KISSINGER: No, the visit was planned before the peace initiative had, what you called, stalled, and long before there was a Jordanian crisis. Let me say incidentally a word about the so-called stalling of the peace initiative.

Under the best of circumstances, you would have to expect that a conflict that had lasted for so long and engaged feelings so deep, would not be settled in one smooth operation. You would expect that it move from its present situation to an ultimate solution, if it should move in that direction, through a series of deadlocks.

So, it is safe to predict that there will be other periods, when the peace initiative is revived, in which there will be temporary interruptions.

We have to guard against oscillating between euphoria and depression in this. But the intention of the trip has nothing to do with reviving the peace initiative.

Q Ron, Dr. Kissinger's remarks about Cuba and the submarines is for immediate release?

MR. ZIEGLER: We will cover that at the end.

Q Do you expect to see Vice President Ky while you are in Paris?

DR. KISSINGER: I will probably pay a courtesy call on Vice President ky. It hasn't been definitely settled yet, and I will be guided by the recommendations of Ambassador Bruce. But I would think that it is very likely.

Q Will you offer him any advice on his travel plans? (Laughter).

Q It is a serious question. Will you offer him any advice on his trip to the United States?

DR. KISSINGER: I have been known to offer advice with little urging. If I should be asked, I would certainly express my opinion.

Q Which is?

DR. KISSINGER: I never give a checklist, because maybe my advice isn't taken and I don't want to undermine my position. (Laughter).

Q Would it be the same as Mr. Agnew's?

Q Doctor, with the possible establishment of Soviet submarines in Cuba, isn't this a bad time to be taking a foreign trip?

DR. KISSINGER: Let's be careful about what has been said. We are watching the events in Cuba. We are not at this moment in a position to say exactly what they mean. We will continue to observe them and at the right moment, we will take the action that seems indicated. We are in excellent communication. Nothing very rapid and dramatic is likely to occur, and we are going to be in very close touch with the situation.

Q Dr. Kissinger, you say that the trip was planned after the cease fire, but before the cease fire violations became acute. Could you elaborate on that a little bit, about what effect the cease fire had on your plans, and what the early reports, as you seem to indicate, of the violations have on the plans for the trip?

DR. KISSINGER: The basic purpose of the trip was, as I have indicated, to consult with the countries that were most concerned about the evolution of the situation in the Mediterranean. This is independent of the particular tactics of one specific initiative. We wanted their view of what a peace in the area would look like. This was what we discussed internally throughout the summer within the Administration.

It happened to coincide with the early period of optimism in the cease fire, but it was really quite independent of that, just as it is, to some extent, not directly related to the later violations.

I would like to call your attention to the point I intended to make, which was that the purpose of this trip has to do more with the long-term position of the United States in the area and the long-term prospects of peace in the Middle East than with the immediate tactics.

Q Has the Soviet Union's performance in the Middle East situation, at the beginning of the cease fire violations, caused you to reassess your concept of their long-term strategy there, and also your concept of whatever the timetable might be?

DR. KISSINGER: As I have pointed out, we have made clear in many statements, and above all, in our performance in the SALT talks and in other ways to the Soviet Union, that we are prepared to have the real solutions to the outstanding problems on the basis of full recognition of Soviet interest and concern, and of course, the same for us.

The problem that in a way both countries face in such a situation is that it is always easier to continue to do what you have been doing than to change your basic orientation.

Obviously, what the countries have been doing, what especially the Soviet Union has been doing in most of the post-war period, is to pursue the Cold War. The question is, can these habits be given up, and can the leaders of both sides -- and I recognize that this is a mutual obligation -- can the leaders of both sides recognize that for the sake of a long-term peace they cannot press every seeming opportunity for a tactical advantage?

It is from this point of view that one has to look at some of the developments that have been mentioned here, it is why we are watching them with such great care.

It is one thing if there is a misunderstanding. It is another thing if it is part of a general policy line that only adapts to modern conditions, the essential philosophy of the Cold War. This is what we have to form a judgment about.

MORE

This would be a great opportunity missed if SALT and other things were jeopardized by some of the methods that were more appropriate to the 40's and 50's.

Q Dr. Kissinger, along that line, if U.S. involvement in foreign affairs has been lagging recently, and if the Soviets ---

DR. KISSINGER: You don't expect me to admit that.

Q If the Soviets have turned out to be merely more sophisticated, rather than more friendly, how much have events of last week, our actions and motions of last week, and this trip next week, served to balance them?

Just let the premises go. That is all right. We will understand.

DR. KISSINGER: I was just going to say after what the Attorney General said about me you wouldn't expect me to admit the premises. (Laughter).

You can observe the relationship of close trust and support that exists on the White House staff. At Harvard, it took me ten years to develop a relationship of total hostility to my environment. (Laughter). I want you to know that here I have done it in 18 months. (Laughter).

I would regret, we would all regret it, if you would look at events on any particular period as if we were engaged in sort of a game where one month the Soviets score a few points and then we have got to score a few points to rectify the balance, and that obliges them a chance to score a few more points against us.

This is a way of looking at foreign policy. But if this is the way it is going to be conducted, the outcome is going to be very serious, because we are both too strong to defeat the other. We can both score points against the other. But none of them is going to be decisive.

If a sequence of events of that type starts, the consequences, sooner or later, are going to be serious. So, we would like very much to avoid having to look at matters in this light, and we are not looking at this trip as a means of scoring particular points, or at the events of the last two weeks as a way of scoring off the Soviet Union or anyone else.

We thought what was done in the last two weeks was essential in order to preserve the peace in the Middle East. Look at what some of the consequences could have been: If a radical government had taken over through foreign intervention in Jordan, then the whole evolution in the Middle East would have been in a more radical direction. The peace initiative would have been down the drain. The possibility of a new Middle East war would have been enhanced enormously, and therefore, the danger of great power involvement would have been enhanced enormously.

MORE

We believe that our actions in the last two weeks helped to preserve the peace in the Middle East. That was our paramount objective. That was in a way saving everybody there, maybe, from the consequences of their own actions and therefore, was even in the interest of some of those who violated some of the understandings. So this was not intended to score off anyone. This was to contribute to the peace and we would like to think, unless something unexpected happens, that it has contributed to that end.

MR. ZIEGLER: We have time for two more questions. Tom, and then we will take Bob over here.

Q Why was this time chosen for the trip?

DR. KISSINGER: We had chosen a time frame in terms of available schedules of about three weeks in which it was possible, between the middle of September and around October 10, given the fact that many of the leaders had other travel plans, and why it fell into this particular week, I really can't tell you. I would like to say that the brilliant NSC staff saw there was going to be a Jordanian crisis last week and therefore, we couldn't go. But that is not the case.

Why it happens in this week, in this particular three week period, has technical reasons. Why it happened in this particular three week period is due to the fact that it seemed to us that when we first planned it, that by that time, when we still thought that the negotiations might go a little faster in the Middle East, that we would be at a point where it was time to take counsel with a lot of people, and the holidays were over. It was reasons of this kind that led to the blocking out of, say, the September 15th to the October 10th period.

Within that, it has essentially technical reasons. There are essentially technical reasons for picking this time.

Q Will this trip and the previous foreign trips the President has taken, Dr. Kissinger, sufficiently prepare the groundwork for a meeting with Premier Kosygin in New York?

DR. KISSINGER: I have to tell you that the press seems to be better informed about Premier Kosygin's travel plans than we are. We are not aware officially that he is coming to New York. If he were to come to New York, the question, of course, might then arise. But we are not aware that he is coming to New York. Therefore, the purpose is not to prepare for a visit by Premier Kosygin.

Q I wondered whether or not the President's words on July 1 about a Mid East peace settlement, which asked that Israel withdraw to the defensible border, is the new formulation of the government replacing Secretary Rogers' formulation?

MORE

DR. KISSINGER: No, you are not going to get me into that one.

Q May we use the remarks about the Soviet construction in Cuba immediately?

MR. ZIEGLER: Dr. Kissinger was so expansive today we have to break the briefing down. The part on his visit to Paris is for immediate release. His remarks relating to the breaking story today regarding the Caribbean and Cuba are for immediate release.

Q What about Moscow, and the peace force in the Middle East?

MR. ZIEGLER: You can quote just direct quotations on Dr. Kissinger's remarks regarding the Cuban situation, attributed to White House spokesmen.

Q Who would the spokesman be?

MR. ZIEGLER: White House spokesman said, just like you say Administration officials said and use quotes.

Bob, if you would prefer to say White House officials said, that is fine. Let's say White House officials said and then quotes.

Q Can we have that sentence back?

Q How about the Moscow story?

MR. ZIEGLER: Let me finish here, please.

We will read what Dr. Kissinger read to you, and then we will have the sections of the transcript relating to the Cuban thing and relating to the trip available for you as soon as possible after you leave here.

Do you want to read that, Dr. Kissinger?

DR. KISSINGER: You mean the quote from President Kennedy?

Q And your comment on it.

DR. KISSINGER: My comment was extemporaneous. We will have it for you within an hour.

MR. ZIEGLER: We will have it in about 20 minutes.

Q How about the Moscow peace force story? The story out of Moscow. Dr. Kissinger commented on it.

MR. ZIEGLER: That also can be for immediate release.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END

(AT 3:47 P.M. EDT)