

TELCON
Gen. Haig/Sec. Kissinger
Saturday, Oct. 6, 1973
10:35 am

7:00 date *

K: I wanted to bring you up to date on where we stand and to tell you my strategy. You may have to calm some people down.

H: Good. I am sitting with the President.

K: O.K. The Egyptians have crossed the Canal at five places and the Syrians have penetrated in two places into the Golan Heights. This we get from the UN observers. Our assessment here is re the facts, it is inconceivable that the Israelis attack would turn in two hours and have the Egyptians crossing the Canal.

H: No question about that.

K: Inconceivable. We have to assume an Arab attack.

H: I think the President feels that way.

K: The open question is, is it with Soviet collusion or against Soviet opposition. On that we have no answer yet. I have called first, as for as our public position, the Sec. Gen. who leaks like a sieve, to tell him about all of the efforts we have made and I have told him that I have been in touch with the Soviets. I have been in touch with Dobrynin and said we should jointly call a Security Council. The Soviets and we. And we jointly offer a resolution calling for an end of the fighting and return to the ceasefire lines established in 1967. I have told them this would be a sign of good faith towards both of us and we would hold up calling for a Security Council until we hear from them. I have informed the Sec. Gen. of that. The Soviets said they would get an answer from Moscow. This is designed in part to smoke them out. If they want the fighting stopped this will stop it fast. If they refuse to do this then we have to assume some collusion. Now if they refuse to do it we have two problems. The first is to get the fighting stopped and the second is the longterm policy. In order to get the fighting stopped we cannot give the Soviets and the Arabs the impression that we are separating too far from the Israelis. That will keep it going.

H: Right.

K: Therefore, as to the facts of the issue, if the Soviets could cooperate with us we will take a neutral position. We will say we don't know the facts but they should stop fighting. You see what I mean?

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H: Right.

K: If the Soviets do not cooperate with us and whole heartedly back back the Arabs on the immediate issue of the fighting we, in my judgment, have to lean toward the Israelis.

H: Right.

K: For these reasons: 1) In order to get the fighting stopped; 2) to prevent the Soviets from coming in at least with (bluster and get a cheap shot?) and 3) to put some money in the bank with the disassociation with the Israelis in subsequent efforts to get a settlement. All depends now on the Soviet reaction. Then after we get the fighting stopped we should use this as a vehicle to get the diplomacy started. Now there is no longer an excuse for a delay. The return to the ceasefire will have two aspects. If today the problem means the Arabs would have to give up a little territory - my estimate is that starting tomorrow evening the (Arabs) will have to give up territory. My view is if the Israelis make territorial acquisitions we have to come down hard on them to force them to give them up. You see.

H: Yes.

K: We have to do that in case of the Arabs but I think it is an embarrassment ~~xxx~~ we won't have very long.

H: Yes. Unless we have had a terrible erosion there.

K: That is the strategy that I am proposing. I think we have no choice. I think the worst thing we could do is to now take a sort of neutral position while the fighting is going on, unless the Soviets take a neutral position with us. If they take one with us, we should take a neutral position. That is ideal. If they don't join us and go to the other side we have to tilt.

H: Sure.

K: You see what I mean?

H: Absolutely.

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K: If the Soviets are all out on the other side we have a mischievous case of collusion and then we have September 1970 all over again and we had better then be tough as nails.

H: The President is seriously considering going back to Washington.

K: I think that a grave mistake. There is nothing we can do right now. You should wait to see how it develops. Wait until at least this afternoon. So far not even a Security Council meeting has been called.

H: He agrees with that. His problem is if it is an all out war for him to be sitting down here in this climate would be very, very bad.

K: Let's wait for the Soviet answer. If the Soviets refuse to cooperate with us, we will know we are in a confrontation and he should then take leadership.

H: I think he will be comfortable with that.

K: If the Soviets do not face us, then I think he should stay down there.

H: Right. O.K.

K: You will make sure that the President is comfortable with this strategy. I think it is our only possible course and it has to be seen in the general context of his ability to act and of what follows afterwards.

H: Is there any effort to get the fleet in a decent posture. The President is concerned about that.

K: That is right. The fleet has been instructed into a position just short of calling them back to ship. They are to locate their people and move on several hours notice.

H: He does ~~not~~ want them assembled as soon as possible for appropriate action if needed.

K: That is being done but we wanted to wait until reports are confirmed and that will be issued within the hour. They need that much time to locate their people.

H: I will be back after discussing it with the President.

END