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THE WHITE HOUSE

PRESS CONFERENCE  
OF  
HENRY A. KISSINGER  
SECRETARY OF STATE

BRUSSELS SHERATON HOTEL

6:43 P.M. (Brussels Time)

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Ladies and gentlemen, I will begin with the President's presentation at the NATO session then I will summarize the bilateral meetings that took place today.

I know you have already been briefed on the ones this morning, but I will sum them up anyway.

On the speech that the President made to the NATO Council, you will have the text and therefore, there is no point in my going through all of the portions.

The President began by summing up the nature of the original American commitment, the purposes that NATO originally had been designed to serve, and stated his conviction that in his view these required no new restatement, that they were as valid today as they were then.

He then discussed a number of problems that he saw before the Alliance, or problems that might affect the Alliance in the field of defense, in the field of disagreements that had arisen between some allies, the field of energy, and with respect to the Middle East.

He then discussed six major areas that in his view required attention.

First, the need for a strong and credible defense. He pointed out that without security no other objectives would make any sense. He called for meeting the longstanding goals for common procedures of equipment, for a more systematic research and development, and reiterated our commitment not to engage in any unilateral withdrawal of American forces.

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You can take that as a given of our policy that outside the MBFR framework, the United States will not withdraw any forces from NATO.

The second point he stressed was the need to preserve the quality and integrity of the Alliance on the basis of unqualified participation and not on the basis of partial membership or special arrangements that individual countries might wish to make with the Alliance.

Q Does that mean that France --

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I will answer questions later. Let me just run through this.

The third was a call for an improvement in the process of political consultation. As you know, it has been our position throughout our discussions with our allies that solidarity with respect to defense cannot be maintained for an indefinite period of time unless there is solidarity with respect to political objectives and in our view, increasing them with respect to the new agenda which the President treated separately.

Fourth, the President asked for a joint action in developing a productive and realistic agenda for detente that serves our interest and not the interests of others, an agenda, in other words, that we could do jointly rather than each of the individual members separately.

He related this to the European Security Conference and to the Mutual Balanced Force Reduction.

Fifth, he called attention to the future of the West, itself, calling for the strengthening of our Democratic institutions within the Alliance and encouraging the growth of Democratic processes within the members of the Alliance.

Sixth, he emphasized that the vitality of the Alliance depended on the conception by the members of the Alliance as a great joint enterprise and not simply as a series of individual efforts and not purely as a defense, and he called attention to the agenda which we have been putting forward all week in other forums of energy, of population, of food, and of raw materials in addition to the need for strengthening the world trading and monetary systems, and he called for cooperative action in all of these things.

He expressed his conviction that the United States had trials over the recent months; it is nevertheless in a strong position -- that we possess the will power, the technical capability and the spiritual conviction to do what is needed to master the agenda that he outlined.

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Now, so much for his presentation at the NATO Council. He was the only speaker except for a military briefing by the Chairman of the Military Committee.

Now, we can proceed in one of two ways: I can either sum up the bilateral talks and then take your questions or I can take questions on this and then -- should I continue?

Q Yes. Sum it up.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Sum up the bilateral talks?

Q Yes, that is correct.

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SECRETARY KISSINGER: The President met during the day, as you know, with the Prime Minister of Luxembourg, with the Prime Ministers of Greece and Turkey, with the Chancellor of the Federal Republic, the Prime Minister of Denmark and with the Prime Minister of Portugal. If I have forgotten somebody, we are in a major diplomatic problem. (Laughter)

As I understand it, you have already been briefed about the meetings that took place this morning.

Let me just add one comment about the discussions that are taking place with the representatives from Greece and Turkey.

We are not, as we have repeatedly pointed out, acting as mediator. What we are attempting to do is, one, to contribute to a framework in which the negotiations between the parties would be eased. We are, therefore, talking to the parties about general principles and approaches that could be followed in moving toward a solution of the dispute between them because we believe that the quarrel between two allies -- both of whom we value -- is against the interests of the Alliance, against their own interests.

We believe that while these negotiations are going on, neither side should take any military actions or make any military threat or take any steps that could lead to military action, and we have expressed that conviction to the parties concerned.

As you know, the Greek and Turkish Foreign Ministers are going to meet tomorrow, and the Greek and Turkish Prime Ministers are meeting on Saturday.

I will be meeting with the Greek Foreign Minister, maybe the Prime Minister, tomorrow, and I will also meet with the senior Turkish official.

We hope that this process will contribute not only to easing the tensions, but to generating a framework in which a solution to their dispute becomes easier and is ultimately attained, and within these limits which I have described to you, we thought the talks went well.

As for the meeting with the German Chancellor, he is, of course, a very close ally and a very good friend. We reviewed the state of the Alliance, the state of East-West relations. We had a brief discussion on the Middle East, but we spent most of our time on the nature of the economic conditions in the industrial world and the problem of industrial growth as they affected stability, cohesiveness of our societies and of our Alliance, as well as the relationship between the industrial societies and the developing society.

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The meeting with the Prime Minister of Denmark dealt with the general problems of the Alliance, and were such common issues as their perception of the Portuguese situation and our joint views on East-West relations.

For the benefit of the fraternity of Foreign Ministers, I want to point out that in each case the Prime Ministers, or Chancellors, were accompanied by their Foreign Ministers, who made a major contribution to the discussion.

Therefore, I hope you will -- yes, the American Foreign Minister also contributed. (Laughter) Just a minute. You don't want to hear about Portugal? (Laughter)

I will be glad to take questions now.

In the meeting with the Portuguese Prime Minister, the discussion was very frank and was conducted in a friendly atmosphere. The President explained his views about the impact on NATO of a Government in which a Communist might play a significant role.

The Portuguese explained to us the nature of their domestic structure, which is, as you all know, unique in the NATO Alliance, and there was a very frank and, I believe, mutual exchange of views.

This is the extent of the bilaterals.

Now, I will take some questions.

Q Mr. Secretary, when you outlined the President's remarks, including the point that special arrangements could not be made, does that mean that if Portugal becomes Communist dominated, there is no way to fit it into NATO? Is that what he was trying to say?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: No, I think that what we were saying, in elliptical diplomatic language, is that the special arrangements that various member nations have already attempted to make cannot become the normal pattern if the Alliance is to survive in its present form.

Q Do you mean Greece pulling out on the military side and Turkey threatening and that kind of thing?

Q Question, sir.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The question is, in Helen Thomas' precise formulation, Greece pulling out of the Alliance, Turkey threatening or that sort of thing, and the answer is --

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Q Military bases.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The answer is we mean that sort of thing. (Laughter)

Q Dr. Kissinger, you are always so enlightening in your elliptical terms. Thank you. (Laughter)

SECRETARY KISSINGER: That is another sort of thing. (Laughter)

Q Mr. Secretary, did the Turkish Prime Minister, according to one report, tell the President that he would prefer not to have the U.S. act as a mediator or to intervene and leave it to both sides to settle this type of dispute?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: No, that did not happen. We have never said that we were acting as mediators. We did not put ourselves forward as mediators, nor did the Turkish Prime Minister tell us what role he wanted us to play, or that he didn't want us to play any role.

The discussions with the Turkish leaders were in the framework that had originally been charted in my two visits to Ankara, and there was no such implication.

It is, of course, clear that the basic negotiation will have to take place between the Greek and Turkish communities on Cyprus, as well as between the Greek and Turkish Governments.

Our role is to facilitate, to help, as we are requested, and perhaps to come up with an occasional idea.

Q Mr. Secretary, the United States having expressed its concern about unqualified membership in NATO, what does it intend to do about it? Were there any specific proposals or does the United States have any specific proposals to carry out this intention?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: No.

Q Question.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The question is, the United States having expressed its concern about the problem of -- not unqualified support, qualified support -- qualified membership in NATO -- what is the United States going to do about it?

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The purpose of the President's speech was to outline the problems he saw before the Alliance and the issues that needed solutions.

As you know, the whole day tomorrow will be devoted to discussion and there will, without any doubt, be additional Presidential intervention as the discussion continues.

This was not an attempt to put forward all of the solutions to all of the problems he outlined.

Q Mr. Secretary, when you, in several different formulations, warned the Turks and the Greeks against taking forceful action, why is it necessary to make that such a strong point?

Q Question.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The question was, if, in several formulations I warned the Greeks and the Turks against forceful action.

It was only in one formulation. I tried to sum up what our general view is, and our view happens to be that the use of force and the threat of force during these negotiations by either side would not be helpful and that the process of negotiation should have the primary role.

There is no specific threat of force at this particular moment, but given the potential tenseness of the situation, we simply wanted to state our view.

Q Mr. Secretary, excuse me. If I could just follow up.

Did the President make that same cautionary remark?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Of course. I am reporting about the President's conversation.

Q Mr. Secretary, what did the President tell the Portuguese Prime Minister he thought the impact on NATO would be if Portugal were dominated by Communists?

Q Question.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The question is, what did the President point out to the Portuguese Prime Minister that the impact on NATO would be if Portugal were dominated by Communists.

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He pointed out that the impact would be unfortunate and somewhat incompatible with the purposes of NATO.

Q Mr. Secretary, in connection with your discussion with the Portuguese, did they give any assurances that it is not the intention of the Portuguese government to be a Trojan horse in a NATO structure, that that was not their purpose? Could you give us some of the language he might have used?

Q Question.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I obviously cannot.

The question is, did the Portuguese Prime Minister give us any assurances about Portugal not being a Trojan horse.

As a matter of fact, that was a phrase that came up in the discussion. We did not ask for any assurances. The purpose of this meeting was to make clear our view and to enable in the first meeting between the President and the Portuguese leaders -- for them to express their views.

We also made clear that we welcomed a change in Portugal from its previous system to a democratic system, and we expressed our good will towards such efforts.

The view of the Portuguese ministers was that they did not represent a Communist-dominated government.

MR. NESSEN: Let's have two more questions.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: You are recognized.

Q During the course of the President's conversation with the Chancellor, were the subjects of Spain and Portugal discussed?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The President pointed out in his speech, which you will get, our view that Spain should have a closer relationship to Western defense. There was some brief discussion about our views with respect to Spain and on which there was, perhaps, not complete unanimity and some brief discussion on Portugal.

We had already, last week when I was in the Federal Republic, extensive conversations with both the Chancellor and the Foreign Minister on Portugal which, of course, the President was fully familiar with.

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MR. NESSEN: The last question right over here.

Q Sir, was the conversation with the Portuguese in English or was that through an interpreter?

Q Question.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: We can ask one more substantive question.

The question was, was the conversation with the Portuguese in English or through an interpreter.

It was through an interpreter.

MR. NESSEN: Jack?

Q Mr. Secretary, what about the meeting with d'Estaing tonight and if you could answer that and tell us how it came about, would you also tell us what you think about France's special relationship within the NATO organization.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I think it is covered in the point that is made in the President's speech.

Q Question?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: With respect to the meeting of the two Presidents. President Giscard called President Ford about two weeks ago and told him that he had decided to attend the meeting of the NATO heads of state, and heads of Government, and on that occasion suggested, or it was mutually agreed, that while he attended this meeting a discussion between the two Presidents seemed appropriate.

We feel very strongly that this is the case, that a number of topics that we wish to discuss, including the energy problem, which I have already had a preliminary discussion with the French President about, Middle East, Atlantic relations and the usual agenda of U.S.-French relations, and, as you know, the two Presidents have a very warm personal relationship.

Q You mentioned energy. You said meeting. You meant dinner?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I meant dinner. I am sorry. He was going to come to the dinner, and in connection with that dinner, a meeting would be appropriate.

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MR. NESSEN: We will see you back here at 11:30 or midnight for any report on the Giscard meeting.

THE PRESS: Thank you.

END (AT 7:08 P.M. Brussels Time)