

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTONUNCLASSIFIED

Secretary Kissinger's Remarks to State Legislators

DATE AND TIME: Friday, April 25, 1975
2:45 - 3:29 p.m.PLACE: The East Room
The White House

Kissinger: Nothing used to infuriate me when I was a professor more than to hear tired officials saying to me that all possible alternatives have been reviewed, the best possible one has been selected and if you know what we know, you would give your support. I have to tell you that all possible alternatives have been reviewed and if you knew what we know, you would agree. [Laughter]

We have gone through a traumatic period. Those who say this is having no effect simply don't know. You should see all the cables we receive about leaders all over the world, who are worried about what will happen and how we have reacted and will react. We can't change the past, but we can shape the future. We must recognize that since World War II, most of the really great initiatives in the world have been American initiatives. Much of the world today is dependent on American attitudes. Most economic problems are political at the base.

As the President said, Vietnam is past us and there is enough blame for all. The worst conclusion we could draw is to conclude that the design of our foreign policy is wrong and needs reordering. In Japan and Asia, our relationship is good.

If we face the fact that as a result of Vietnam some of our problems have become more difficult; if we determine not to withdraw from the world, we can succeed. If we are to deal in the world, though, we must deal with authority. Those who deal with the President are



not interested in the separation of powers; they are interested in the conduct and commitments of the United States as conveyed to them by the President. The basic design of our foreign policy is good. The only ones who can defeat us are ourselves. We need support from the Congress, and we on our part intend to bring the Congress in to the extent possible.

Question: Why hasn't the UN taken a position on Vietnam?

Kissinger: The UN hasn't because the parties didn't want to take the issue there. But you have a good point. The UN is more and more taking positions more and more anti-American. The non-aligned are in fact a bloc, and we will not take their line as placidly as we have in the past.

Question: Isn't the reassessment in the Middle East the reassessment of a friend, and won't that further weaken our word in the world?

Kissinger: The reassessment is not directed against Israel. It was necessitated by the termination of a policy that we had followed for 18 months. If we have to go to Geneva, we will be confronted with a diplomacy far different from what we have been doing.

Question: How about our Latin America policy?

Kissinger: We have the longest unbroken association with Latin America. We want to strengthen these ties. But some of these nations want associations different from our traditional ones -- like joining the Group of 77. We are trying to build a constructive role with them to develop a good relationship between the developed and the developing states.

Question: Doesn't the financial power of the Arabs make things look bad to the Israelis and lead them to preemptive attack?

Kissinger: I don't think they solve their problem by preemptive attack. They are in good shape militarily, but the basic issue is that 3 million have to get along with 130 million.

Question: I am troubled by your statement that we can't afford to lose control of events and therefore we must keep engaged. I think we kept in place the governments of Vietnam and Cambodia which did not have the confidence of their people.



Kissinger: First, a few facts. We never promised overtly or any other way to support a particular government. One could expect that agreements we signed we could be expected to want to support.

We shouldn't try to control events that we can't control or need not control. But not to attempt to control events which affect our vital interests risks our getting involved in a much deeper way.

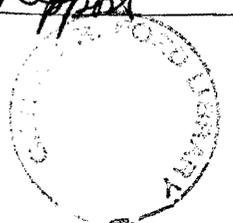


✓ K remarks to State Legislators 2:45-3:29 pm
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25 Apr 75

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officials saying all possible alt. have been
reconsidered, a best position has been selected
& if you know what we did, you ~~would give~~ ^{will give}
your support. I have to tell you (repeated)
We have gone thru transition period. Those who
knew this having no effect simply don't know.
You should see all culds of these worried about
what will happen & how we will react. We
can't change past but we can shape
future. We must recog that since WWII
most of a really great civilization in a world have
been Am. Much of a world today is dependent
on US attitude - most econ probs are political
at base.

As I said, VN is part & there is no prof. blame for all.
The worst conclusion we could draw is that a
design for our EP is wrong - old reading. In
Japan ^{USA} our pro relationship is good.

Open face that as result of VN some of our probs
have become more dig; if we determine not
to w/d draw from world. If we are to deal in a world
tho, we must deal w/ authority. Those who deal
w/ a Pres are not interested in a separation of powers
They are interested in the conduct & interests of a
US as conveyed to them by a Pres. The basic
design for an EP is good. They only ones who
can object is are ourselves. We will support



from a long time on our part we intend
to bring a long in to the extent possible

Q Why hasn't a UN taken a position on VN

K The UN hasn't because the parties didn't want to take a
position. But you have a good point. The VN
is more & more taking positions more and more anti-
US. The non-aligned is in fact a blur and we
can't not take their line as obviously as we have
in a past

Q Don't a reassessment in ME a reassessment for friend and
enemy that further cooperation would be possible.

K Reassessment isn't directed against I. It was necessitated
by a termination of a policy, one that followed by fact &
was. If we have to go to Geneva we will be confronted w/
a dilemma of policy from what we have been doing.
(a bit more?)

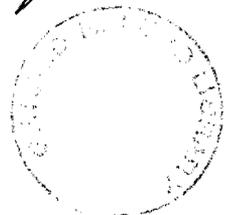
Q How about our LA policy.

K We have a longest unbroken association w/LA. We
want to strengthen these ties. But, these nations want
actions different from traditional ones - like joining a group of ??
We are trying to build a constructive role w/ them to
develop a good relationship but aligned & developing states.

Q Doesn't a provincial power of a state make things look
back to the CIA & lead them to preemptive attacks.

K I don't think they solve their job by preemptive attacks.
They are in good shape militarily but basic issue
is that 3 mil have to get along w/ 100 mil.

Q I'm troubled by your statement that we can't afford to lose
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VN, Cambodia

I think we kept in place parts which did not have
a confidence of its people.

" There is a few facts. We never promised ~~anything~~ or
any other way to support a part part. ~~So~~ (1) we could
expect that agreements can support and could be expected
to want to support.

We shouldn't try to control events we can't control or
we can't control. But not to attempt to control events which
affects our vital interests risks our getting involved in
a war.

