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THE WHITE HOUSE

PRESS CONFERENCE
OF
HENRY A. KISSINGER
SECRETARY OF STATE

VAAKUNA HOTEL

6:35 P.M. (Helsinki Time)

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Let me talk briefly about some of the meetings that took place today, and I will group them by subject.

We talked first about the breakfast of the President with Prime Minister Demirel, and then I had a brief meeting in the afternoon with Foreign Minister Bitsios. As you know, I had two meetings -- a meeting with the Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia, a meeting with the Foreign Minister of Bulgaria, and then, of course, there was the four-power lunch. I will talk about them in this order and then I will take your questions.

The meeting with the Prime Minister of Turkey: the President reviewed all aspects of the relationship between Turkey and the United States. Of course, also, they discussed in some detail the Cyprus question and possible means of negotiating a solution.

The relationship between the United States and Turkey and the whole complex of issues involving Greece, Turkey, Cyprus and the United States, is taking on the aspect of a Greek tragedy in the sense that each of the main actors, following perfectly understandable reasons and the laws of his own nature, is bringing on consequences they cannot possibly intend.

We, as I pointed out yesterday, believe strongly that the security of the Eastern Mediterranean requires good American relations with both Turkey and Greece. We believe, also, therefore, that a solution of the Cyprus problem is important. Indeed, it is crucial to this.

At the same time, the legislative actions that have been taken in the House of Representatives are reducing our influence and are making it more difficult, in addition to jeopardizing, as the Secretary of Defense pointed out yesterday, the national security of the United States.

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We reviewed the situation. We discussed those possibilities that are open to us under existing legislation, as well as various measures that are now before the Congress. I don't believe that a significant change in the situation was registered, except that both of the leaders -- both President Ford and Prime Minister Demirel -- expressed their strong desire to maintain the traditional friendship between Turkey and the United States and to restore the security of relationship to the situation that existed before events of last week.

I reviewed in a bilateral meeting I had with Foreign Minister Bitsios the state of Cyprus negotiations. I expressed to him the United States' willingness to be as helpful as we could, regardless of American legislative decisions. Also, we tried to assess what real possibilities existed.

I had a meeting with the Foreign Minister of Czechoslovakia and the Foreign Minister of Bulgaria, and I expressed to both countries, both Foreign Ministers, that the United States has no -- there is no obstacle on the United States' side to an improvement in relations.

They expressed their strong desire to make progress in improving relations between the United States and their countries. We decided to start talks on scientific and technical exchanges and other subjects that might lead gradually to an improvement of our relationships.

With respect to the four-power lunch, the atmosphere could not have been warmer and more constructive, and we think it is a very significant result of the many meetings that President Ford has had with these various leaders bilaterally and, of course, of their many contacts with each other, that an atmosphere of cordiality and confidence exists that goes back to the very best days of allied relationships.

We had a review of the European situation, particularly as it affected the status of Berlin. There was a discussion of the Middle East and prospects for negotiations in the Middle East, as well as the position the various countries might consider taking with respect to issues that might come up at the United Nations affecting the Middle East.

On these subjects we will have to have a further exchange of views.

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The subject of Portugal was discussed, and I think the unanimous view was dismay at the prospects for pluralistic democracy in Portugal. There was a brief discussion of economic issues in which some of our friends pointed out to us their concern as to American interest rates, but most of the discussion really concerned the relationship between the economic situation and the political situation; that is to say how the industrial democracies could convince their people that they were in control of their economic destinies.

No conclusions were reached. No decisions were taken. It was a discussion of the problem at the end of the general discussion which I have outlined. These were the major meetings that took place today in which the United States was involved, and now I will take your questions.

Q Mr. Secretary, the German press officer briefing this afternoon said the Big Four meeting had reached conclusions on opposing any move to limit or expel Israel's role, or expel Israel from the UN; that you agreed to hold a conference in 1975 on currency problems and to prepare a conference including Japan, on interest rates. You say no conclusions were reached?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I have listed the topics that were discussed. With respect to the United Nations, each of the countries represented has stated its view that it would oppose the expulsion or suspension of Israel from the United Nations or the expulsion or suspension of any other member for political reasons contrary to the charter, but no conclusions were reached as to the particular measures that will be taken, and the four countries decided to be in touch with each other.

With respect to the monetary conference, there was no agreement reached to hold a monetary conference while I or the President was in the room.

Q You seem to be leaving open an option.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I believe this must be based on a misunderstanding of either the German press officer or the translation from the Germans. There was no decision reached to hold a particular conference.

The subject matters were the ones I described. Individual members raised individual problems but no conclusions were reached and no decision was reached to hold a particular conference, which does not exclude that one could be held later, but no decision was reached to hold a conference now, and I did not even hear a proposal that one should be held on currency.

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Q Mr. Secretary, on the Turkish situation, there was a meeting today between the Turkish and Greek Foreign Ministers. Do you know anything about that meeting, whether they made any progress, and can you bring us up to date on what the situation is now in the House of Representatives regarding a vote?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I have heard only the Greek Foreign Minister's view as to the meeting with the Turkish Foreign Minister, and he did not feel that great progress was made, but I have not yet had an opportunity to talk to the Turkish Foreign Minister.

I believe in any event these two Foreign Ministers ought to comment about their own meeting, and I should not comment about a meeting in which we did not participate.

As far as the situation in the House of Representatives is concerned, I am a little bit behind events. The latest information I have was at noon, in which the legislative people reported to the President about primarily the situation in the Senate.

The latest information -- it was supposed to come up for a vote at two o'clock this afternoon, and it cannot move to the House until the Senate has acted, and there were various parliamentary issues about unanimous consent.

We have not a clear estimate as to what will happen in the House of Representatives. We do have a clear estimate, however, about the consequences of what has happened, and we continue to believe it is in the interest of the United States, in the interest of Turkey, in the interest of Greece and in the interest of Cyprus, that the Congress act along the lines of our recommendations.

Q Can I follow that up, Mr. Secretary. There was an impression this morning after the meeting that President Ford had with Demirel that the Turks might reconsider their actions on the U.S. bases or might go slow in taking them over in some way; in short, that they might have agreed with what you said yesterday about the value of these bases to NATO security.

Did you find any cause for optimism in the session this morning between Ford and Demirel?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: Our view has always been that our aid to Turkey is not a favor to Turkey any more than our bases in Turkey are a favor to the United States.

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But, to answer your question specifically, we had no reason to believe, on the basis of the discussion this morning -- even though we explored several possibilities -- that there would be any prospect of a change in the closing down of American operations on these bases under present conditions.

I might add, incidentally, that one of the subjects that was also discussed between the Prime Minister and the President was the question of control of opium, in which the Turkish Prime Minister promised to do whatever was necessary to make sure that none of their poppy production would go into private channels, that all of it would be handled through Turkish governmental channels.

Q Mr. Secretary, along those lines, some of your Congressional critics in Washington, specifically Congressman Brademas and others, are raising questions as to why President Ford has not offered to waive \$50 million in foreign weapon sales to Turkey under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1981.

Was that discussed today at all?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: First of all, we have to be clear what it is that Congressman Brademas and Congressman Sarbanes have proposed to us. What they have proposed to us is that Turkey make some concessions first. After Turkey has made some concessions, they would hope still for the President to waive up to \$50 million of grant aid.

It is a subject that was discussed at some length between the President and Prime Minister Demirel, as it had been discussed in March, between myself and at that time the then Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, and as it was discussed on the visit of Assistant Secretary Hartman in May, and as it was discussed on the occasion of my visit in May.

In other words, the proposal to waive \$50 million in grant aid has been put repeatedly to Turkey. The Turkish position has been that they do not want a gift of United States aid; that their objection is to the embargo of an ally with respect to purchases that Turkey had already made and with respect to the Turkish ability to buy American equipment for cash or credit; so Turkey has consistently refused this proposal as a question of principle, because they feel that there is something contradictory about offering to give \$50 million for free while preventing them from buying with their own money American equipment or taking delivery of American equipment already purchased.

The President made an eloquent presentation of his authority in this, and he received the same answer that we had received on four previous occasions. It is absolutely incorrect to say that the United States has not attempted to use this possibility.

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Q Mr. Secretary, so we understand that precisely, did the President offer to waive the \$50 million in exchange for returning the control of the American bases over to the United States?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The President offered this as a possibility in order to solve the problem that is posed by the bases, and it was not accepted.

Q Mr. Secretary, is there any particular impression of significance of the Brezhnev speech?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: We have not had an opportunity to analyze it with the various Kremlinologists, so our reaction is a relatively off-the-cuff reaction based on brief exchanges.

We thought that on the whole it was a moderate speech, and on the whole it was a conciliatory speech -- which does not mean that we agree with every paragraph in it.

Q Mr. Secretary, is there anything in the speech today -- you say on the whole it sounded conciliatory-- is there anything in the speech today that bothered you?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: It depends what interpretation you give to certain phrases. For example, on the one hand, the phrase "there should be no interference in the domestic affairs, the internal affairs of other countries," has positive elements if you look at some of the things that have happened in Europe in the past two decades.

On the other hand, you can interpret it in another way -- with respect to the application of Basket 3. I am assuming that those principles that have been agreed to in the document will be lived up to in their entirety.

We have stated repeatedly that to us the document of the European Security Conference will be a criterion for how the implementation of the process of detente is working.

Q Isn't it possible, though, sir -- to put the interpretation on the Secretary's speech -- when he says don't dictate to us our internal affairs, that he is saying in effect a pox on Basket 3?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I have attempted to say -- I have said -- that if that is the interpretation we would not agree with it. Our assumption is that those obligations specifically undertaken in the European Security Conference will be carried out; that to the extent they will not be carried out that would, of course, raise serious questions. We do not interpret it in this way. I admit, however, that that phrase is capable of ambiguous interpretation.

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Q Mr. Secretary, you mentioned yesterday that you were going to seek to put Turkish aid on a new basis and favored a radical rather than a stop-gap solution. Could you explain what you meant yesterday, and whether that was offered to the Turks, and what they said?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: What we believe and what we have believed for the last year -- particularly since the negotiations started between the two sides -- is that a global solution of the Cyprus problem would enable all of these elements that we are now discussing piecemeal, to be dealt with in a coherent fashion.

One of the tragic aspects, as I view the situation, is that if the two sides could ever negotiate without artificial constraints, we judge the differences between the two sides to be not unbridgeable, but there are so many other elements that get involved -- domestic situations, national pride, and other pressures -- that have prevented a consecutive period of negotiation geared towards a rapid solution.

As far as United States-Turkish relationships are concerned, we continue to believe, as I said yesterday, that the fundamental security interest of Turkey and the United States require close association. But we have not found a way around the legislative obstacles that now exist.

Q Are you talking about some sort of a conference on the subject of Cyprus-Greece-Turkey-United States relations, or some such thing, to settle all the issues at once?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: We strongly support a rapid solution of the Cyprus issue and we have repeatedly offered our good offices to both of the parties, and both of the parties -- and especially the Greek side -- have urged us to remain active.

As you may know, the President had an opportunity after dinner last night for an extended conversation with Archbishop Makarios, but one of the sad aspects of the present situation is the deadlock that has resulted before the negotiations have ever really got rolling.

Helen?

Q Mr. Secretary, could you give us a curtain raiser on what the President is going to say tomorrow in view of the approach, the track he will take?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I think the President obviously should speak for himself and will speak for himself. Basically, I think the President's speech will put forward our view as to the nature of detente, the importance of detente, the nature of it, the significance of the European Security Conference, what needs to be done in the future to give it complete political meaning and what other tasks are ahead of us in addition to what was done here.

Q Mr. Secretary, you said the President made an eloquent presentation of the constraints that are operating on him?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: No. I said with respect to Mr. Brokaw's question, it was: he made an eloquent presentation of the possibilities he has for waiving certain restrictions of the law in order to make clear that there was one limited area with respect to grant military aid in which he had discretion under existing law.

As Turkey has done on the previous occasions on which this was raised, they take the position that it is contradictory to be given for nothing certain amounts of aid while they are prohibited from taking possession of equipment they have already paid for and being prohibited to pay for their equipment.

They, in short, want the embargo lifted with respect to purchases. They do not particularly insist that it be lifted with respect to gifts, and we are in the paradoxical position that we are pleading with them to take for nothing what they insist they want to pay for.

Q Did you tell the Turkish Prime Minister that all of this was the fault of the Congress?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The President did not discuss whose fault it was. The President explained to the Prime Minister what authority he had under existing legislation and told the Prime Minister that he would be prepared to exercise that authority.

I hope we will not reach the point where various parts of the American Government, the Executive or the Legislative, go around to foreign governments to line up support against other branches of the government, and this is not the policy of the President nor the policy of any other member of the Administration.

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Q What are you going to do about Turkey now, Mr. Secretary, about the whole question, the bases and the Cyprus issue?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: With respect to the bases, these are decisions now that Turkey must make and Turkey must decide how far it wants to go in eroding a relationship that must, in the long term, be as much in its interest as in ours.

With respect to Cyprus, we remain prepared to use our good offices. In addition to whatever the United States might do on a national basis, we have talked individually to several of the members of the European Community, and we would encourage action by the European Community to help solve the disputes between Greece and Turkey.

We are prepared to join them, or we are prepared to act separately. But, we cannot, by ourselves, create entirely new conditions so we believe that the conflict between Greece and Turkey is a disaster for both countries and is a disaster for the Western alliance. We hope that all parties concerned -- within the United States, as well as in the Eastern Mediterranean -- will understand the larger interest involved.

Q Mr. Secretary, are you certain that the Turks will still accept the quid pro quo for returning the bases for military aid or have relations been exacerbated by the latest House vote so that they might, even if the House were to go ahead with this aid --

SECRETARY KISSINGER: It is our impression that the situation is still recoverable; in other words, that the bases could be substantially restored if the House reversed itself.

In addition, the President has made clear in his many briefings to Congressmen -- and he has also made it clear to all the parties here -- that if the Congress reverses itself, the United States would feel a particular moral obligation to accelerate progress on the Cyprus issue, but in any event, we will do our best, though our ability to be effective has been reduced.

Q Mr. Secretary, there was a meeting today between Demirel and Soviet leader Brezhnev. Is there any danger here that if action is not reversed, that Turkey could go into some kind of relationship with the Soviet Union, military relationship?

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SECRETARY KISSINGER: I consider it extremely unlikely that Turkey would go into a military relationship with the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, as the relationship between Turkey and the United States deteriorates, Turkey will look for other connections.

In my judgment, they are not necessarily or not in all likelihood going to be Soviet connections. They could be in other areas. In any event, when one looks at the situation in the Mediterranean, on one end the event in Portugal, it seems to us extremely risky, by American actions, to break up the security arrangements in the Eastern Mediterranean, and I say this without choosing between Greece and Turkey because we require the friendship of both and we consider both equally important.

Q Mr. Secretary, if I may return to the Conference for a moment and Mr. Brezhnev's speech, does it give you any pause when he practices the so-called well-known humanistic policies of Lenin, which he wants to spread around the world?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: This was an interpretation of Lenin, which I would not have put first on the agenda if I had been asked to give a lecture. (Laughter)

Q Mr. Secretary, do you believe that the Soviet Union, because of Helsinki, will make some new move in Asia--whether the Soviet Union would propose an Asian collective security system?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The Soviet Union has not shared with me the future plans of its foreign policy, but if the Soviet Union is thinking of an Asian collective security system, it would be a conference without American participation.

Q Mr. Secretary, how far is the United States prepared to go in preventing Israel from being thrown out of the UN?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: The United States has expressed its very strong opposition to either the expulsion or the suspension of Israel from the United Nations. The United States objects to this on the grounds that it is in violation of the charter.

The United States will certainly take definite and clear actions should the United Nations take a vote in violation of the charter. What this action will be, I do not think it is appropriate for me now to discuss but we believe that such a decision by the United Nations would have serious consequences for the world organization.

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Q Mr. Secretary, we received some reports from various U.S. officials to the effect that the loss we have encountered in Turkey as far as our intelligence gathering capability is concerning missile developments and other military matters is irreplaceable and they speak in the most dire terms of what could happen if we do not in some way regain this capability in Turkey.

Would you assess that for us?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: We have briefed Members of the House of Representatives and Senators as to the installations that are relevant to that issue. We believe these installations -- under present circumstances it is hard to see how they could be replaced.

For me to attempt an assessment here is impossible because it involves highly classified security information. But the blow would be very serious, especially with respect to certain categories of information that impinge on verification problems.

Q Mr. Secretary, Prime Minister Wilson today expressed concern about Portugal and you said it was greeted with dismay. Are the four powers any closer to trying to expel Portugal from NATO than they were before the Helsinki meeting?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: No specific decision was made or indeed no particular procedures were discussed as to how the various countries could register their dismay, except to make sure that we would stay in close contact with each other, but it was recognized that events in Portugal are of profound consequences for NATO, for the political evolution of Western Europe, and that they are incompatible in our present understanding of them with any concept of pluralistic democracy.

Q Then you did discuss attempts to expel Portugal?

SECRETARY KISSINGER: I thought I said we did not.

Q You said no decision was made.

SECRETARY KISSINGER: No. What I attempted to say was the relationship -- the impact of Portugal on NATO under these conditions was discussed, as it was discussed already in Brussels, but no specific proposal with respect to it was made. The meeting was primarily an analysis of the situation rather than a discussion of courses of action.

THE PRESS: Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

END (AT 7:15 P.M. HELSINKI TIME)