

By KALW NARA, Date 5/13/01

TELCON  
President/Mr. Kissinger  
6/24/72 12:25 p.m.

RN: Henry, how did the briefing go?

HAK: I think it went very well.

RN: Was there a great deal of interest.

HAK: Oh yes, I thought it would be a five or 10 minute thing--they kept me for 45 minutes in the press room.

RN: What kind of questions did they ask and what kind did you dodge (laughing)

HAK: I dodged them in a way--I didn't say a damn thing, but I made it sound terribly profound.

RN: Did you get across the point, which I think is very important, you know, that our relations with them are very good--that's the thing.

HAK: Oh yes.

RN: That's the think that I think will really bust or burn the Soviet's ass and also it will make these people.

HAK: Oh yes, I got that across--I said first of all I want to thank --on the President's behalf--the leaders of the People's Republic for the extraordinarily courteous reception we received--then I described our program which in itself has made them a little pop-eyed-- Then I said things are moving forward on all fronts--there would be more exchanges, more trade, and then I said

RN: Did you make the point that those initiatives that were offered to the Soviets were offered to them or did you not want to do that?

HAK: I did not want to do that comparison

RN: I see--that is probably just as well, too--burn the ass of the Soviets.

HAK: Well, we don't want to burn the ass of the Soviets.

RN: That's right, that's what I mean.



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HAK: Also it would annoy the Chinese to think that they were sort of lagging behind.

RN: On Vietnam--

HAK: Oh god, about 50%--I said nothing--ever since we came into office, the President has asserted that negotiations were the best way of ending the war--we are proceeding on that course. They said well, will negotiations start soon--you know, I wanted to set up what you were going to say on Friday, so I said gentlemen it is not a question of procedure, it is a question of substance--as soon as we have made some progress of assuring ourselves some substance there will be negotiations and we will then announce it. And we are working on that intensively.

RN: Very good, very good.

HAK: Then, they said, did you discuss it with the Chinese leaders and I said yes at great length, and I said but I want you to understand these are men of principles --they don't share our views on Vietnam but that isn't the problem, the problem is whether with everyone recognizing the need for peace it is possible to find a formula... end tape 1

(Begin new tape of 6/24/72 - #3)

K: ... without saying a damn thing.

P: Well, as a matter of fact, things are going on, Henry.

K: Well, of course, Mr. President, something tremendous is going on.

P: Sure, sure.

K: I talked to Dobrynin again this morning.

P: Oh, tell me about that.

K: Slobbering all over me, saying how serious his leaders are and when can I let him know whether we are ready to negotiate. I said on Monday I'll give him an answer. Because I think we should first notify the North Vietnamese. They shouldn't hear it from them.

P: What will the gameplan be there, Henry?



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- K: The gameplan is that Monday we will tell the North Vietnamese we accept the 13th.
- P: For a public session.
- K: Right. And the 18th or 19th for a private session. They said, will private talks start again, today. I said we never talk about private talks but of course we don't stand on procedural issues; we'll explore every channel.
- P: Right. Now when will the announcement of the fact of the public talks be made in your opinion?
- K: Well, it's up to you. You should make it on your press conference on Thursday.
- P: I think that would be good, don't you?
- K: That's what I had planned, if you were willing.
- P: Here's what I thought -- that we could make the troop announcement maybe Wednesday low key. How does that sound to you?
- K: Excellent.
- P: Rather than doing it in the press thing. Otherwise, the interest in the press conference we build up too much. And the troop announcement will go down.
- K: Oh, no; I think you should do the troop thing on Wednesday and then follow it on Thursday night -- and I wouldn't make it as a formal announcement.
- P: Answer to a question, you mean.
- K: Because that would annoy them.
- P: Just an answer to a question?
- K: Yeah, because you are sure to get it. In any event, you can plant it.
- P: Oh, I don't worry, we'll get it and I'll see that it's planted too.
- K: Right.



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- P: And then I just say, yes; we are going back to public talks on the 13th.
- K: On the 13th.
- P: Well, you prepare me a little bit of answer on that.
- K: Right. Well, another thing is Dobrynin when he talked to me this morning, he had just received a message and he said you -- you remember you told Brezhnev about the grain deal in your last discussion?
- P: Yeah.
- K: He said they've considered it and there's a man coming over on Tuesday to conclude a grain deal.
- P: (laughter) God.
- K: You know, that's another result of the China trip.
- P: Uh-huh.
- K: Cause as soon as we do something to China, they feel they've got to do something towards us. But they want us to keep that secret until it's concluded.
- P: That's right; we don't need that now.
- K: Well, we get it concluded by the end of July I'm sure.
- P: It seems to me that Peterson's trip -- I've just been sitting here as you talked -- should be scheduled right after the Democratic Convention.
- K: That's right.
- P: We start grabbing the news.
- K: That's when we have it scheduled, the 15th.
- P: Maybe then cause I won't be back from California till then -- wait a minute, the 15th, that's while their Convention is just ending and that's a little soon. I don't want to have his arrival --
- K: We'll put it off a week.





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- P: But what I want him to do -- I think what he could would be to -- Because we're going to stay in California over the weekend after the Convention because I've got to meet the Teamsters out there.
- K: Right. When are you planning to come back?
- P: Tuesday after the Convention. That would be the 17th or 18th or something like that.
- K: Right.
- P: Which will give a little more time for all of us, we all need that.
- K: Oh, God, yes.
- P: So Peterson might even come out there but anyway don't have him go. You can give Peterson a ring and say that I thought of this but I don't want him to leave and be in Moscow right at the time the Convention because nobody is going to pay any attention. I want him to go right afterwards.
- K: Good. We'll do it a week later. We'll just slip it a week.
- P: Or might even slip it 4 or 5 days, that's about all.
- K: Right. But it would be useful to announce it say the Tuesday after the Convention and then leave on Friday or Saturday.
- P: Right, right.
- K: Well, we've got this thing humming now.
- P: How is the offensive coming? The Hue offensive. I went out today looking over the disaster areas of Pennsylvania --
- K: They've knocked out 22 tanks yesterday.
- P: My God, I can't believe it. They're doing something because they knocked up 15 earlier in the week.
- K: Mr. President, Abrams has certainly learned one thing. He had 91 B-52 strikes around Hue yesterday.
- P: (laughter)



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K: 91, Mr. President. We had 30 -- that's three times as many as we used to do in all of Vietnam.

P: Is that right?

K: Yeah.

P: I'll bet he's glad that we forced him to take those B-52s, don't you think?

K: Oh, God. That Commander <sup>took</sup> me around that B-52 base. You cannot believe it. Those B-52s are stacked one on top of another. It is absolutely awe inspiring.

P: Did you meet any of the men?

K: Yes.

P: How's their moral?

K: Tremendous.

P: Is it?

K: Oh, yes. They have a B-52 strike in Vietnam now every 41 minutes.

P: Oh, boy. Listen, Henry, this is punishing these people, believe me.

K: I would say that if these 100 B-52s are dropping their bombs at random without even aiming at anything, they've got to hit something if it's in such a concentrated area.

P: Sure, sure, sure. Well, around Hue -- Well, look what's already happened. Anloc saved. Komtum saved.

K: Yeah.

P: Incidentally, one thing though, Abrams has got to tell Thieu he's got to get that goddamn 21st Division into Anloc. It's just ridiculous; that's becoming a laughing stock, don't you think?

K: Oh, yeah. But we told them every other week, Mr. President. There's something deeply wrong there. He's got to replace that III Corps Commander. I think, incidentally, Mr. President, we ought to send Haig out there for two reasons. One, to give us an assessment. For three reasons. Two, to make sure we and Thieu are together on the



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- K: (cont'd) negotiations. And three, it will just show even more activity.
- P: Good. I'm all for it and when do you think he should go?
- K: I think he ought to go maybe Thursday.
- P: Sure. That's good. That announcement can go -- you know what I mean, that'll be very, very good.
- K: Just before your press conference, we'll announce it.
- P: We'll have so much damn stuff going on, there'll be smoke in their eyes.
- K: Exactly. And it's all real too, it's not just maneuvering.
- P: I know, I know.
- K: Because we have to be, you know, in some sort of agreement with them.
- P: Yeah, yeah; that's right. Good. And also to look at the military situation, kick Abrams in the ass a little, and Thieu and the rest. I've been constantly telling -- when the Vietnamese Ambassador left and he said what do you want me to tell our President. I said, just as soon as he can, he must launch some kind of an offensive. You've got to launch an offensive.
- K: Right. Well, they're planning that for the 28th.
- P: Are they?
- K: Yeah.
- P: You mean on Quang Tri or what?
- K: Yes.
- P: You know they might find that there's a lot of paper up there. They may just go.
- K: The problem may be we may find them in North Vietnam before the next three months are over.
- P: Do you think so?



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- K: Yeah. I think we ought to let them go.
- P: Oh, absolutely. Until we get a settlement.
- K: That's right. They are no good on the offensive, that's the only thing that stops this.
- P: Well, I know. That's what I thought tanks were for. And we have a lot of tanks out there now, haven't we?
- K: Yeah. But they are just not aggressive on the offensive. They are fighting very well on the defensive.
- P: Um-humm. I'm worried about SALT. I think that it's important next week that you sort of pick up the threads of that and get Buckley, Jackson and all those guys or the ones you can back of --
- K: Well, Jackson has sort of simmered down a lot. Right now he's on a sort of a nitpicking kick.
- P: That's right. But <sup>basically</sup> having some argument about SALT is fine. Did you get a chance to read what I said about it?
- K: Yes, outstanding.
- P: Haig's people did a hellva job in preparing the talking points but I added a little. You see, what I'm thinking about is to change the emphasis. To change the emphasis to basically from well, if we don't get this offensive weapons, then I've got to -- then Laird says I've got to oppose this. Well, that gives the impression that this is a bad deal for us.
- K: Exactly.
- P: We've got to say this deal is good for us period. Good for the security of the United States. But two, the security of the United States also requires the other. And third, if you want real arms limitation, the big step it requires is second. I mean, let's stick it right to them.
- K: I think that's exactly right.
- P: They didn't ask you about that in your conference today, did they?
- K: No.



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P: Well, then we've probably got that pretty well simmered down

K: There was no question about that. It was all either China or Vietnam. Oh, they were fascinated. China still is the fascinating --

P: It is, it is.

K: But I think we'll get good stories tomorrow. I didn't go overboard because I don't want to needle the Russians too much.

P: Oh, no. I'm going to write a handwritten note to Chou En-lai.

K: That would be very good.

P: And, of course, we'll photostat it so you can see it and have a copy.

K: I should get it delivered.

P: Yeah, yeah; that's what I mean. But it will be a handwritten note and I'll photostat it and you can deliver it. That's one of the grace notes he'll appreciate.

K: Very much.

P: I don't think the Russians would particularly appreciate one, do you?

K: No, it's no longer necessary with them.

P: However, never fail to find an opportunity to write Brezhnev so that he feels that he and I are writing.

K: Oh, yeah. No, we owe him a letter now. And I've invited Dobrynin to come out to the West Coast.

P: Very good. We'll give him a personal message there. I should get a letter off to Brezhnev every three weeks or so, you know, about just some damn thing.

K: Right. Oh, there'll be plenty of occasions. I think once we get the talks started, we ought to do it again.

P: You think we've got Rogers positioned properly?



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K: Oh, yeah. When he left at the airport today, he said there's no sign of any progress on the North Vietnamese.

P: Oh, boy. Oh, that's all right.

K: Actually, he was too tough.

P: He said it was too pessimistic.

K: But that's all right.

P: There's no reason for him to say that because he knows there is going to be progress, doesn't he? We told him.

K: Yeah. Well, he just isn't very subtle.

P: If he'd said, Look, I'm just not going to talk about it; we're working on it.

K: Well, I left the impression that a hellva lot was going on, Mr. President.

P: With Rogers, Henry, I meant we didn't cover a thing except the real meat. Except, you know, who's going to do what when. We didn't tell him the dates did we?

K: No, no; we'll have to notify him.

P: Well, those must be kept and also the troop withdrawal thing.

K: Well, that you've told him.

P: Yeah. I just wonder if on that -- Well, I think 10,000 is right.

K: We shouldn't do more. We cannot.

P: I don't mean more; I'm thinking of less.

K: Yeah. We've cleared it with Abrams now so we should let it go.

P: Oh, have we?

K: Yeah.

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- P: Cause I'm going to be gotten off this kick that it's got to be at a certain number a month, sort of -- you know, they'll react to that but the point is, My God, we've already cut the rate and we're cutting it again.
- K: That's right. We've got to as we get down to --
- P: Otherwise, we'll be to zero before we know it.
- K: That's right.
- P: This puts us to about what we have in Korea right now.
- K: Exactly. Just a shade below actually.
- P: What do we have in Korea?
- K: 43,000.
- P: Well, see, there we are. Incidentally, that should be a subtle point made when the troop cut thing is done. This means we now have less than in Korea.
- K: Yeah. I think that's a good point.
- P: I have a feeling this all-volunteer thing. Bill didn't react to it particularly but I think that's mean something to people, what do you think?
- K: That means a hellva lot more than troop levels. What people are worried about isn't troop levels but whether their son is going.
- P: Even if there's only 6 being killed, if they think, well, he doesn't have to go to Vietnam unless he's a volunteer. I think that's something. It's a very good thing to hit. Well, I hope you get a good rest and see your kids. I'll bet they're excited about going West again.
- K: Oh, they are really thrilled by it.
- P: When will they come down?



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- K: Friday morning. I don't know when we are going, Friday?
- P: We're going Friday afternoon about 3:00 p.m. or so. I just can't tell till I see how much I have to scrap up because of Congress.
- K: Yeah. Well, they're coming Friday morning then.
- P: There's a terrible problem with the debt limit and those bastards may stick around and force me to stay a day. But if so, they ought to go out with Bus -- They wouldn't mind staying a day in Washington with you anyway, would they?
- K: No, not at all.
- P: Have they seen the Pandas?
- K: I don't think so.
- P: Why don't you plan to take them out to see the Pandas on Friday? Wouldn't that be great?
- K: That would be great.
- P: There's an idea. You didn't see the Pandas, did you?
- K: Yeah, I've seen them.
- P: I haven't. But anyway you ought to take your youngsters or maybe we'll have -- I don't think Tricia has seen them -- we'll have Tricia take them out to see the Pandas and that's a hell of a China story.
- K: That would be great.
- P: Mention that to Bob at his convenience. Everytime we can touch up the China thing, we should touch it up a little.
- K: I think that would be terrific.
- P: Because when you really come down to it, sure we disagree on Vietnam but this China thing is a lead up back on what we've done in these 4 years. It's still going to be the biggest thing we've done, over the long haul.
- K: It's made everything else go.





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P: But also, there is a different relationship with China; they need us.

K: Exactly.

P: They need us.

K: Well, I told Haig this morning they are our best ally right now except on Vietnam.

P: You know, come to think of it, they are.

K: Because they are tough. They fear our assessment of the Soviet Union.

P: Yeah. I have another thought that might be of interest. In this case, rather than my writing, or maybe if you think I should, I think we ought to get a note to about a dozen of the top people in these estate types about your visit to China. What do you think?

K: Yeah, that might not be a bad idea. I think it ought to come from you.

P: Right. We can say I just wanted to give you a report on Dr. Kissinger's visit to China.

K: At least the reliable ones; Heath, McMahon --

P: Heath, McMahon, and I think you could even cover the Mexican President in a thing like this.

K: No, that son-of-a-bitch has really not behaved too well.

P: You mean, he's kicking about our --

K: Well, he got after us again in New York. It's inexcusable.

P: You mean about not helping Latin American --

K: Yeah, and that you didn't seem to know much about this salinity issue.

P: Oh, I didn't see that.

K: Yeah.

P: I didn't know about it; Christ, I knew too much, that's why I didn't want to make the deal.

DECLASSIFIED  
E.O. 12958, as amended, Sect 3.5  
NIN 05-33/12 per 01x 3 July 2008  
By CU NARA Date 2 Apr 2009  
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- K: No, we shouldn't do anymore for him. Now for the Brazilian we might do it.
- P: Let's do it for him then. Fine. Maybe he was just pandering to those -- he met with a shocking group, I don't know why State would ever have done it. I. F. Stone -- what the Christ is he meeting with him for?
- K: That's right; Arthur Schlesinger --
- P: What the hell is he doing? Why did State arrange such a thing in his schedule? They're always wanting to meet with intellectuals but why with total enemies?
- K: I couldn't agree more.
- P: What do you think? Don't you think that was poor planning?
- K: I think it was a great mistake. Very wrong.
- P: That's where he said all this you know.
- K: I know it.
- P: He was pandering to them. But he should have said a lot of positive things because Good God, we built him up, we gave him that kind of treatment. I saw him twice at great length. You know, all they do is talk and talk and talk.
- K: Exactly. Frankly, that's why I'm mad at him.
- P: Haig will tell you. I mean, we just bent over backwards for that fellow.
- K: Exactly. Exactly right.
- P: What do you think, some Left Wing influence?
- K: Oh, yeah. He's trying to cater to the Left Wingers.
- P: Um-humm. Well, I suppose that's the problem.
- K: So I wouldn't reward him right now, quite honestly.
- P: Fine. But I would cover Heath, Pompidou --

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K: Oh, yes; any of them. Yeah, absolutely.

P: What about the Canadian? No, I don't think so.

K: No, we have to worry about not leaking it back.

P: Right. All right, fine.

K: And Brandt we can give a little palaver too.

P: Yeah. And I'd like to pick three or four smaller countries.

K: Right.

P: I notice one other thing that would interest -- Tanaka they say now has a good chance. I thought Fukuda was going to get it. What's your evaluation?

K: I think Tanaka has an excellent chance. I'm not so worried about him because he's a pretty tough guy.

P: Well, he incidentally --

K: He'll turn out to be more nationalistic

P: On a personal basis, he's very friendly to me. His daughter was our supporter in '68. He told me so.

K: Oh, really. I didn't know.

P: When she was in school here. Oh, yeah.

K: No, no; I think you'll be all right with Tanaka. I had a long talk with him.

P: Well, that's good, that's good. You think he's pretty tough?

K: Oh, yeah.

[Break in tapes - Start Tape #3]

P: ..... He couldn't make it this morning but at this point, the only thing keeping this war going is McGovern. That's got to be made by somebody sometime.

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- K: Yeah, but I think we should give it a little more -- In fact, I'm wondering about the following, Mr. President, as a tactical device. I'm wondering whether I shouldn't call McGovern and give him just enough of a feel for the negotiations so that we can say afterwards knowing what we're doing, the son-of-a-bitch is coming us anyway.
- P: Uh-huh.
- K: And asking him to lay off for a while.
- P: If you could do it discreetly, I'd do it.
- K: Well, even if it leaks.
- P: All right, fine.
- K: I mean, I'd call him and say look, I want you to know what's going on.
- P: I'd do it also with Humphrey and Muskie.
- K: Right.
- P: We should do it with the three of them.
- K: Together?
- P: No, not together. But I'd be sure that I'd covered all three so that McGovern's opponents will not -- because some of Humphrey's supporters will desert McGovern. I don't want them to think that we just started to play McGovern.
- K: Right.
- P: Cover Humphrey; cover Muskie.
- K: Right. But I think it has the advantage that we can then say, he knew and he went ahead anyway.
- P: That's right, that's right. Good.
- K: Good.
- P: Well, get a little rest.
- K: Right, Thank you, Mr. President.