

Kissinger and Nixon Confer on Mideast

WASHINGTON, Dec. 24 (AP) —Secretary of State Kissinger, described as optimistic about prospects for peace in the Middle East, reported personally to President Nixon today on the opening of Arab-Israeli talks in Geneva.

Emerging from the White House after the hour-long meeting with the President in the Lincoln Sitting Room, Mr. Kissinger said there had been a full discussion on the Middle East.

He would not elaborate, but a high United States official described Mr. Kissinger as reasonably confident that after the Israeli elections on Dec. 31 there would be progress on disengagement of forces on the Suez front.

The Secretary returned to Washington on Saturday right after a 15-day journey to 13 countries in Western Europe and the Middle East, capped by his attendance at the Geneva talks that opened Friday.

He told newsmen at the White House he would have another meeting with President Nixon tomorrow.

'Lot of Work to Do'

One official said Mr. Kissinger might return to Geneva next month, and the Secretary told a newsmen, "I have a lot of work to do in the next two weeks."

Mr. Kissinger had no comment on the decision by Persian Gulf oil-producing countries to double the price for their crude oil, a topic he and President Nixon presumably covered at their meeting.

Before the meeting, the high United States official reported that Mr. Kissinger was reasonably confident that Egypt and Israel could reach agreement next month on a military disengagement near the Suez Canal.

Once that is accomplished, Mr. Kissinger expects the negotiations to move on to the reopening of the canal to Israeli shipping and the ships of all nations carrying goods to and from Israel.

The conference in Geneva was suspended Saturday after two days and is expected to resume after the Israeli elections.

U.N. Commander in Geneva

Special to The New York Times

GENEVA, Dec. 24 — Lieut. Gen. Ensio Siilasvuo of Finland, commander of the United Nations Emergency Force in the Middle East, arrived here today to preside over the military talks between Egypt and Israel on the disengagement of their troops on the Suez front.

The first attempt to disentangle the two forces in negotiations at kilometer 101 on the Cairo-Suez road broke down on Nov. 29 with Egypt accusing Israel of "stalling".

The negotiations are to resume here later this week, probably on Thursday, within the framework of the Middle East peace conference that held its first session here last Friday.

The establishment of a military working group to discuss disengagement was the first decision made by the conference, which brought together Egypt, Israel and Jordan. The United States and the Soviet Union were co-chairmen and Secretary General Waldheim presided.

The Soviet Foreign Minister, Andrei A. Gromyko, left Geneva for Moscow today with what he said was a "feeling of satisfaction" over the work done—even if it was only a beginning.

He said that the participating countries were "conscious of the responsibilities they bear for resolving the problem facing them."

The Soviet Union, he added, will continue its efforts to insure that the conference continues on a "constructive basis."

U.N. Troops Endangered

CAIRO, Dec. 24 (Reuters)—The United Nations reported here today that Israeli tanks fired close to truce observers on Saturday—the second day of the Middle East peace conference. There were no casualties among the United Nations troops.

The incident, south of Abu Suweir on the Cairo-Ismailia

road, was one of 40 cease-fire violations on Saturday reported today by the United Nations.

The head of the United Nations Emergency Force, Lieut. Gen. Ensio Siilasvuo, who flew to Geneva today, protested earlier for the second time in two days to Israel and Egypt over a cease-fire violation endangering United Nations cease-fire observers.

In both cases the observers were from the Finnish battalion based in the city of Suez. A United Nations spokesman today corrected his earlier statement that there had been no protest over the second incident.

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