

Among the factors that could have influenced Nixon's precipitation of his greatest ~~at~~ of all crises until then, the confiscation of the investigation of him and his minions by Special Prosecutor Cox that could have been enough to overcome Congressional reluctance to consider impeachment, is the so-called "cease fire" he pretended Henry Kissinger had worked out after he rushed Kissinger to Moscow.

It was all faking, typical Nixonian faking. He had to have been desperate or utterly separated from his senses - or both - to have tried to pull this. The odds were, if anyone had taken time to think, that there could be no cease-fire and he would be bound by still another failure.

If he hitched his wagon to that, it was a loadstone. not a star.

There is never a time when negotiations of the ramifications required for any meaningful agreement among disagreeing nations is left to last-minute chatter, no matter how high the level of the talkers. Whatever Kissinger and the Russians agreed to while Nixon was ripping of the files and the staff that could pin criminality on him personally and without doubt would on his former closest associates, if it had not been worked out in advance, it was a diplomatic first. The big boys merely formalize.

As Nixon had his Watergate needs, so did the Russians have the most pressing problems from Israeli military advances, spectacular enough by their nature but even more sensational considering that they had been the victims of a Pearl Harbor launched on the holiest of their religious days, one on which to the orthodox locomotion other than by foot is prohibited. Overwhelmingly outnumbered as they were, in a matter of days the Israelis wrested the initiative from the attackers and recaptured more of their buffer Arab territory than had been taken in the sneak attack. Before the over-touted Nixon deal was formalized, the Israelis had crossed the Suez canal into Egypt proper, were less than 50 miles from Cairo (not their objective) and had wiped out all the Russian-installed SAM missile bases on the central sector. Militarily speaking, in the same dramatic operation, they encircled a major part of Egypt's forces in the Sinai.

The Russians, for the Egyptians in particular, the Arab states in general, and for themselves and their own faces, urgently needed an end to ~~the~~ hostilities and the

astronomical drain replenishing war-lost Egyptian and Syrian equipment. His frightful cost to the Russians can be ~~estimated from the~~ visualized from the initial reports of their airlift to Syria alone, estimated at 800 tons a day.

Kissinger's hasty trip to Moscow followed immediately upon Kosygin's return from a trip to Cairo improvised in such a rush that he had to cancel appointments with visiting dignitaries.

There were no announcements about his hegira to Cairo. Ordinarily he would have gone there under normal circumstances because of the plight in which his Egyptian mendicants were or for a celebration.

He had nothing to celebrate.

It took little thought and no information to believe he had gone there to get Sadat's agreement to a deal. When Kissinger flew to Moscow almost immediately after Kosygin got back, there was little doubt Kissinger was going to Moscow to wind up negotiations that had been going on all the while in Washington.

So, getting the Russians to agree to what they urgently needed was no great success.

Few will argue against a meaningful cease fire. If there should never be wars, the best thing about them is that the shooting can stop.

Once the Moscow deal was formalized, using their considerable power, the United States and the USSR had a special meeting of the UN Security Council convened for the night ~~of~~ the Nixon coup, ~~Saturday~~ ^{after} Sunday, October 21. The text of the agreement was there is Kissinger was not. He went to Israel.

The rush both major powers demanded annoyed those not of the nuclear club. It denied time for council members to confer among themselves or with their government, also not a diplomatic norm. With the abstention of China, which content itself ~~in~~ in condemnation of big-power power politics, the resolution was agreed to about ~~3~~ 2:30 in the morning.

And all the United States media joined in hailing it as a great accomplishment. It could have been. A hard look might have disclosed a disillusion because it was

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based upon the resolution of 1967, the one that had been workable.

Any assessment of the conditions of the opposing sides had to suggest this was but another stopgap which had as the one certain asset immediate relief to the USSR and to Nixon, personally, for he desperately needed something to which he could point and claim success.

If it had been up to the Israelis, whose total population counterposed against the entire Arab world relates about as Philadelphia does to all the United States, there would have been no war after the initial end of hostilities. But from 1948 the Arabs refused to sign a peace treaty, refused to negotiate one, and refused to negotiate after the most overwhelming defeat ever administered in any war, their disaster of the Six-Days war of 1967. Their ~~policy~~ policy, loudly proclaimed, is the destruction of Israel. For the Israelis this means life or death. If they lose a major battle, they lose their lives and their state.

Having sustained an unprecedented defeat, the Arabs then undertook to extort at the non-conference table what they had not been able to win by war. No such thing has ever happened. There was never a nation less capable of considering such an incredible demand than Israel.

The Arabs have their own interpretation of the old, 1967 resolution. They say it means that before anything else can happen, Israel must surrender all the buffer territory it took in that war. They take this position because they do not want peace, do want the end of Israel, and can't get it by force. Regardless of what one way consider the rights and wrongs of that situation, that this is the one way it can't be resolved has to be more than obvious.

So, using this resolution as the basis for the new cease-fire ~~it~~ was to guarantee its destiny as a cruel hoax perpetrated for the immediate benefit of Nixon and the USSR.

Moreover, there had been no consultation with any Arab state except ~~Israel~~ Egypt. Predictably, none observed it when it went into effect 12 hours after the Security Council "resolved" nothing but a piece of meaningless paper.

Were this not the case, there remained what Israel could not and would not

accept, a complete lack of restraint upon the Arab terrorists who had taken many innocent Israeli lives. The most dramatic illustration outside of Israel of this indiscriminate terror is the slaughter at the Munich Olympics. If any Israeli government dared consider this a "solution" and agree to it, its fall would be rapid.

On their side, all Arab rulers had made of their war against Israel, no matter how it was waged, a holy war. Initially, I believe, it was not of religious base. Rather was it that there was no Arab government in the world worthy of existing if service to the needs of its people is the standard of measure. The holy war against Israel was the one issue all had, the one by which each kept itself in power.

Neither side, then, could dream of living up to what was said to be the spirit of the new UN resolution steamrollered by the major-power combine. No government on either side that made an effort without guarantees not expectable from the other side could survive. In the Arab lands, to make the effort was to commit suicide.

What did Nixon have then? At best a scant chance to buy a few days of time.

But at what potential cost? Jews are an articulate minority in the United States, influential beyond their number because they provide a disproportionate percentage of the professions. The cause of Israel is and always has been one to which a majority of Americans are warmly sympathetic. Major contributions to the Jewish National Fund in its early, post World War I days, were made by immigrants from other lands and their children, Catholics in particular. After establishment of the State of Israel, their contributions toward making it a home for the outcasts of Europe and the unwanted of the Arab world grew larger. So, if this rushed improvisation failed, as from the first moments of UN agreement the odds said it would, Nixon may have eased the first days of his latest in a series of unprecedented crises he precipitated to distract the people from his preceding, deliberately provoked crises.

But he may thereby have hastened his departure from office or an inconceivable possible alternative, holding it by force.

Even if against the odds it worked, it was the desperate act of a desperate man.