

U.S. Determined to Press for Solution

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Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger put the Arabs and Israelis on notice yesterday that the United States would press for a solution of the long-standing Middle East crisis, saying that there was now "an opportunity that the great powers have no right to be permitted to miss."

The determination to push for a settlement, repeated several times in Kissinger's press conference yesterday, meets a long-standing Egyptian demand for a big-power role in getting a solution. Israel has been adamant in insisting upon free negotiations between the parties of the region to establish peace.

Kissinger noted yesterday that Israel, as a result of the U.N. resolution worked out by the United States with the Soviet Union earlier this week "has been given an opportunity for the negotiations it has sought for all of its existence."

But he left no doubt that the United States would, as he put it, "lend its diplomatic weight to a serious effort in the negotiating process." With some finality, he said: "The United States recognizes that the conditions that produced the war on Oct. 6 cannot be permitted to continue."

An opportunity now exists for reaching a settlement, he said. "The terms that have been agreed to in the United Nations provide an opportunity for the peoples of the Middle East to determine their own fate in consultation and negotiation for the first time in 25 years."

But the United States, he made clear, will, with the Soviet Union, be playing an important role. "This is an opportunity we are prepared to foster," said Kissinger. "It is an opportunity which is essential for this ravaged area and which is equally essential for the peace of the world. And it is an opportunity that the great powers have no right to be permitted to miss."

Kissinger indicated that the United States had specific ideas about the shape of a settlement, although he was careful not to spell them out. "We will make a major effort to bring about a solution that is considered just by all parties," he said, "but I think no purpose would be served by my trying to delimit the exact nature of all of these provisions."

Kissinger's predecessor, William P. Rogers, infuriated the Israelis when he set out ideas for a settlement that provided for only "insubstantial alterations" of frontiers existing before the outbreak of the 1967 war.

Kissinger left the outcome to negotiations in which the United States would not be passive. "Our position is that . . . the conditions that produced this war were clearly intolerable to the Arab nations, and that, in a process of negotiations, it is — will be — necessary for all sides to make substantial concessions."

Forecasting a substantial role for Washington, he said: "The United States' problem will be to relate the Arab concern . . . for the sovereignty over territories to the Israeli concern for secure boundaries."

Before the crisis that led to the presidential decision to put U.S. forces on alert, Kissinger said, he had met with Soviet Ambassador Anatoliy F. Dobrynin for "preliminary discussions . . . about the site, the participation and the procedures for these talks." But he did not provide any details, leaving that "until the parties are prepared to announce" them themselves.

Negotiations could get underway, Kissinger said, "in a matter of a very few weeks." The Security Council resolution calling for negotiations said talks should start "immediately and concurrently with the cease-fire . . . under appropriate auspices."

Kissinger announced that "the United States and the Soviet Union were prepared to offer their auspices, if this was approved and acceptable to the parties, to bring about, and then to speed, the process of negotiations."

The United States, he said, "continues to be ready to carry out this understanding," which apparently was reached during Kissinger's talks in Moscow last week-end with Soviet Communist Party chief Leonid I. Brezhnev. Kissinger used his press conference to reconfirm U.S. interest in a U.S.-Soviet role in Mideast negotiations.

He said that in seeking to improve relations with the Soviet Union "to remove the dangers of war," the administration had recognized that it was dealing with "an ideological and political adversary. If the Soviet Union

and we can work cooperatively, first, towards establishing the cease-fire, and then towards promoting a durable settlement in the Middle East, then the detente will have proved itself," Kissinger said.

But as adversaries, he noted, "we often find ourselves drawn into potential confrontations. And each of us has friends that themselves pursue objectives that may not be sought fully by either of us." In this diplomatic way, he indicated that neither the Soviet Union nor the United States supported all the objectives of their Middle East clients.

"On the basis of the conversations that I had with General Secretary Brezhnev as late as last Sunday, and the communications that were exchanged afterward between the President and Brezhnev, there was every reason to expect that while, of course, our interests were not congruent, and while, of course, there were differences in approach, that a certain parallelism could develop in the direction of producing a permanent peace . . ."

There have already been signs that the Soviet Union does not totally support the Arabs in their demands for the return of all the territory they lost in the 1967 six-day war.

Israel demands secure and recognized boundaries that would rule out a total return. The United States, on the other hand, clearly supports Israel's need for borders that are more secure than those existing in 1967 and which led to the outbreak of war. But there is no indication that Washington would stand for massive territorial changes.

In the past Israel has been adamant about holding on, at the least, to the Golan Heights, from which Syria used to shell Israeli settlements; Jerusalem, which is unified and declared its capital, and Sharm el-Sheikh, the salient at the southern tip of the Sinai desert from which Egypt controlled Israeli access to the Gulf of Aqaba. No demilitarized zones and no amount of international supervision is a substitute for territorial security, the Israelis have said.

Israel also insists upon recognition by, and has sought full diplomatic contacts with, the Arabs as a sign of willingness to make a true peace. It also seeks assurance of freedom of navigation through interna-

tional waters that were frequently—and sometimes permanently—closed to it by its Arab neighbors in the past.

The Arabs demand a solution of the Palestinian problem, which dates back, in their estimation, to the first Arab-Israeli war in 1948. The Arabs have indicated this means restitution of territory, a demand that, if met, would mean the virtual dismemberment of Israel as it now exists.

These are the problems on the agenda of any future negotiation. The problems have existed all along but there are differences now, chief among them the superpower determination to get a settlement. "The overriding goal in the Middle East must be a just and durable peace," Kissinger said yesterday. "That the United States is prepared, and indeed determined, to promote."

Kissinger noted that there were other differences, which made the prospects for peace "quite promising." Israel, he said, "has experienced once more than the trauma of war" and has been given an opportunity for negotiations. The Arabs, he said, "have demonstrated their concern and have received international assurances that other countries will take an interest in these negotiations" — a long-standing Arab demand.

The Arab have also gotten, through U.N. Security Council action, the international force they have sought as a way out of the impasse with Israel. Whether the fledgling observer force evolves into a peace-keeping force for the future cannot be predicted now, but it seems likely it will be in place for some time. The U.N. Emergency Force sent to the Mideast in 1956 remained for 11 years, until it was ejected by Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser.