

U.S. FORCES PUT ON LEST SOVIET SEND CRISIS EASED AS

WORLDWIDE ALERT TROOPS TO MIDEAST; U.N. SETS UP A PATROL

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KISSINGER SPEAKS

He Cites Ambiguous Signs by Moscow as the Cause

By **BERNARD GWERTZMAN**
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Oct. 25—The United States ordered its military forces on a worldwide "precautionary alert" early this morning, citing overnight concern that the Soviet Union was planning to introduce military forces into the Middle East. But the crisis seemed to abate when the Soviet Union joined in a United Nations Security Council resolution barring big powers from participating in Mideast peace-keeping force.

Secretary of State Kissinger said at a news conference in

Transcript of the Kissinger news conference, Page 19.

Washington that the United States was not seeking a confrontation with the Soviet Union.

And a State Department spokesman, noting that Mr. Kissinger had said that such a Security Council vote would ease tensions, termed the United Nations action "a step in the right direction." But he said that as of late this afternoon the precautionary alert was still in effect.

Other officials said that because of the Council vote some military units might be taken off alert by tomorrow morning.

'Ambiguous' Signs by Soviet

The alert was instituted after the Soviet Union gave what Mr. Kissinger called "ambiguous" signs that it might intervene to help out Egyptian forces caught behind Israeli lines and faced with destruction or surrender despite the cease-fire.

Military officials cited an alert of airborne troops within the Soviet Union as one cause of the American alert. [Details on Page 20.]

Intervention by the big powers, Mr. Kissinger warned, could cause major tensions in the world.

The sudden developments, unforeseen yesterday when the White House was reporting that the Middle East cease-fire was taking effect, shocked the nation's capital and led President Nixon to postpone his scheduled news conference this evening in which he was expected to defend his actions in the Watergate tapes controversy.

Denied by Kissinger

The crisis, caused by the uncertainty in Washington about the ability of the superpowers to avoid a direct confrontation over the Middle East, also produced some speculation that Mr. Nixon might have ordered the alert to distract domestic criticism.

Mr. Kissinger denied such allegations strongly, saying: "It is symptom of what is happening to our country that it could even be suggested what the United States would alert its forces for domestic reasons."

He added, in his televised news conference, that "the President had no other choice as a responsible national leader" than to follow the advice of his top advisers and order the alert at 3 A.M.

In a serious mood, and ap-

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parently fatigued by the long hours he had spent on the Middle East crisis, Mr. Kissinger said he had been surprised by the sudden turn of events that he said had precipitated the decision to order forces into a "Condition 3 alert," which means that precautionary steps should be taken.

Imminent war is "Condition 1," and peacetime "Condition 5." Since the Vietnam war the forces have been on Condition 4.

In his news conference, Mr. Kissinger seemed determined to follow a double course — to warn the Russians about the American opposition to a big-power involvement directly in the Middle East and to keep open the road to improved relations with the Soviet Union despite the latest strains.

Mr. Kissinger also was careful not to let the concern over the reported Soviet actions destroy the framework already built with Moscow for settling the Middle East crisis.

He said that the chances for a lasting Middle East peace were better now than at any other time, and he disclosed that Moscow and Washington were ready to hold Arab-Israeli negotiations under their auspices, as called for by Monday's Soviet-American Security Council resolution.

Cause of Crisis

He said that the crisis had developed because of the breakdown in the cease-fire that he had worked out with Leonid I. Brezhnev, the Soviet party leader, in Moscow over the weekend. This had led to certain Israeli territorial gains and a "worrisome" turn of events, he said.

Although he did not provide many details, it seemed from the context of his remarks that the crisis reached its height following a request yesterday by the Egyptian President, Anwar el-Sadat, for Soviet and American forces to intervene in the area to supervise the truce and to prevent further Israeli gains against his forces, particularly the III Corps, trapped on the eastern bank of the Suez Canal.

Mr. Kissinger said: "We possess, each of us, nuclear arsenals capable of annihilating humanity. We, both of us, have a special duty to see to it that confrontations are kept within bounds that do not threaten civilized life. Both of us, sooner or later, will have to come to realize that the issues that divide the world today, and foreseeable issues, do not justify the unparalleled catastrophe that a nuclear war would represent."

Note from Moscow

The United States vigorously rejected the Sadat proposal for American and Soviet troops yesterday afternoon, but apparently the Soviet Union in a note delivered to Mr. Kissinger by the Soviet Ambassador, Anatoly F. Dobrynin, at about 8 P.M. yesterday indicated it supported Mr. Sadat.

Mr. Dobrynin's note was also reported to have suggested in strong terms that if the United States refused to join in the peace-keeping force the Soviet Union was prepared to do so by itself.

It was this warning, combined with some reports of Soviet troop activities, that led the National Security Council, meeting at the White House, to recommend that American forces be put on alert.

The Council comprises Mr. Kissinger; Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger; Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and William E. Colby, director of Central Intelligence, as well

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Meets at 10:30 A.M. and 3 P.M.

Political and Security Committee—10:30 A.M. and 3 P.M.

Economic and Financial Committee—3 P.M.

Working Party on Review and Appraisal—10:30 A.M.

Social and Cultural Committee—10:30 A.M. and 3 P.M.

Committee on Trust Territories—3 P.M.

Administrative and Budgetary Committee—10:30 A.M.

Tickets may be obtained at the public desk, main lobby, United Nations headquarters. Tours: 9 A.M. to 4:45 P.M.

as other high-ranking military and diplomatic officials.

Mr. Kissinger said that it was "inconceivable" that Soviet and American forces be introduced into the conflict, and "transplant the great-power rivalry into the Middle East, or alternatively, that we should impose a military condominium by the United States and the Soviet Union."

Opposition by U.S.

"The United States is even more opposed to the unilateral introduction by any great power—especially by any nuclear power—of military forces into the Middle East, in whatever guise those forces should be introduced," he said.

The decision to order the alert, he indicated, followed the Soviet message and some military movement.

Without providing details, he said: "It is the ambiguity of some of these actions and communications, and certain readiness measures that were observed, that caused the President at a special meeting of the National Security Council last night, at 3 A.M., to order certain precautionary measures be taken by the United States.

After explaining the American decision, he outlined American goals in the Middle East. These included the following:

¶To assist any United Nations observer force, including supplying of some personnel.

¶To aid in taking care of humanitarian problems caused by the existence of enclaves, within both the Israeli and Egyptian fronts, of enemy forces cut off from their main lines—in particular the trapped Egyptian III Corps.

¶To make a major effort to seek a political solution acceptable to all sides, as called for by Monday Security Council resolution.

Many of the questions directed to Mr. Kissinger at the news conference dealt with the state of Soviet-American relations, a controversial issue in Washington for several months, with many Congressmen opposed to the policy of seeking improved ties without getting significant political concessions in return.

The Soviet support for the

Arab side in the war increased the controversy, with the Nixon Administration and critics both asserting that Soviet behavior in the crisis will test the value of the new relationship.

Mr. Kissinger was asked about the "détente policy", and he said "I think we can make a better judgment when we know whether peace has taken hold."

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

"If this does not happen, then we have made an effort for which we have paid no price, that had to be made, and then one has to wait for another moment when the task of insuring or of bringing peace to mankind can be attempted," Mr. Kissinger added.

Asked About War

Because of the mood of tension in Washington caused by the sudden developments early this morning, Mr. Kissinger was asked many questions about the possibility of war. He repeatedly tried to take some of the heat out of the crisis.

"We do not consider ourselves in a confrontation with the Soviet Union," he said at one point. "We do not believe it is necessary at this moment to have a confrontation."

He said that neither country had made any threats against the other, and that "we are not talking of a missile-crisis-type situation."

This was a reference to the Cuban missile crisis of 1962 when the Soviet Union and the United States came close to confrontation than ever before.

"We are talking about a precautionary situation and not an actual one," he said.

Other officials said the hot line, a direct telegraphic connection between Moscow and Washington for emergencies, had not been used.

Mr. Kissinger had originally planned to hold his news conference earlier in the week to discuss the results of his Moscow talks with Mr. Brezhnev.

Kissinger's Earlier Plan

Until last night's developments, Mr. Kissinger had expected to give a very positive estimate of Soviet-American relations as the result of the cooperation achieved in working out the cease-fire resolution, his assistants said.

In fact, Mr. Kissinger said that he met yesterday afternoon with Ambassador Dobrynin to discuss the possible format and details for Arab-Israel negotiations, called for under the Soviet-Ambassador cease-fire resolution.

He said that Washington and Moscow were preparing to hold the talks under their auspices, if this was acceptable to the Arabs and Israelis.

This would mean taking the negotiations out of the United Nations framework. This was anticipated because of the Soviet unhappiness about the

presence of the Chinese on the Security Council, and because of Israel's feeling that she had little support in the United Nations because of the backing given the Arabs by the non-aligned and Communist blocs.

Mr. Kissinger stressed that the Security Council vote today barring the big powers from the peace-keeping force had been crucial as a text of whether the Russians would agree to remain out of the Middle East directly.

"If that resolution is accepted and carried out, we believe that it will lead to an immediate easing of the situation," he said.

In answer to another question, Mr. Kissinger said that "the alert will not last one minute longer than we believe is necessary."

"And it would be taken off as soon as any danger of unilateral action is removed," he added.

Talking about the Middle East in general, he said that the problem in negotiations called for under the Soviet-American cease-fire resolution would be "to relate the Arab concern for the sovereignty over the territories to the Israeli concern for secure boundaries."

"We believe that the process of negotiations between the parties is an essential component of this," he said.

The dispute between Egypt and Israel has been over the Arab demand that Israel withdraw from all territory occu-

pled in the June, 1967, war, and Israel's insistence that for security reasons she should be able to keep some land.

Mr. Kissinger said that both sides would have to make substantial concessions for peace.