

'900 lb. Gorilla' Kissinger Out To Stop Mideast Peace

Despite the fact that he was not directly responsible for the historic meeting between Prime Minister Begin and President Sadat, President Carter and his Administration spokesmen hailed that meeting as a major step towards a Geneva conference. Speaking to reporters just before Sadat landed in Israel, Carter reaffirmed his

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differences with the brinkmanship foreign policy of Henry Kissinger, saying that the visit would lead to an overall settlement, not separate peace agreements. Throughout the week, the President has been on the phone with both Begin and Sadat and has been working behind the scenes to move the Middle East situation forward to Geneva as rapidly as possible.

It should come as no surprise therefore that former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger should announce his opposition to Carter diplomacy. Kissinger is now telling reporters and television interviewers what he is known to have been saying privately to Congressmen, Jewish leaders, and others: an overall peace agreement is impossible and step-by-step diplomacy à la himself must be resumed. This is a policy-orientation that Kissinger, among others shares with the currently dominant faction in British government and finance.

In speeches to the World Jewish Congress and American Jewish Congress earlier this month, Kissinger warned Jewish leaders that they should look warily at any Carter peace initiatives. This week, "Kissinger has been working furiously to undercut Brzezinski and wants a separate peace" said a Washington, D.C. based Mideast specialist who is close to both the Pentagon and the Israeli government. In an interview with *New York Times* columnist James Reston, Kissinger point blank stated that it is a mistake to keep talking about "a comprehensive Middle East settlement" at Geneva as if that were to be the outcome of the Sadat-Begin meeting. Making the same point, Senator Jacob Javits (R-N.Y.) wrote a special article for the Nov. 21 *New York Post* titled, "Step by Step Is the Only Way For Visit to Pay Off."

Kissinger himself has been not so subtly angling for a renewed public role in Middle East diplomacy, and spoke to Sen. Howard Baker (R-Tenn) just before Baker proposed in a television interview two weeks ago that Kissinger be especially appointed by Carter to participate in Mideast negotiations.

The former Secretary is winning support for his position by manipulating the political aspirations of Republican opportunists close to the Republican National Committee. In an interview with the *Washington Post* Nov. 21, former President Gerald Ford, who never fully broke with the idea that Kissinger was

'brilliant' in the field of foreign policy, repudiated the most positive aspects of his own personal Mideast policy interventions and backed up Kissinger's derision of a Geneva.

Ford has declared that Geneva must serve only to ratify an agreement already worked out, so that the talks would not collapse into a war.

One day later, Kissinger took to the TV to mount his attacks on the Administration. In an interview on the Today Show, Nov. 23, Henry said that Geneva should not be a forum for negotiating a peace agreement. What's more, he declared that the Soviets have only contributed to war in the area and should not be involved in peace discussions pursued by the U.S.

"Kissinger is doing a disservice to U.S. interests by deflating Geneva," declared a Georgetown University Middle East expert, commenting on Kissinger's television interview in particular. "His view on the Soviets in the Middle East is naive." An aide to a leading Democratic Senate supporter of Carter's policies proclaimed Kissinger "the Republican's 900-pound gorilla" who is trying to revive step-by-step negotiations. No one knows what he will do next."

The Administration has not sat idly by while Kissinger is on the rampage. Only a few hours after his Today Show interview, Deputy Secretary of State Warren Christopher reaffirmed the Administration's policy and directly countered most of Kissinger's comments, in a speech to the Union of American Hebrew Congregations Convention in San Francisco.

N.Y. Times: Take the Credit, Henry

The New York Times, on the occasion of the Sadat-Begin breakthroughs toward a Geneva Conference, somehow managed to construe this as the proper occasion for a tribute to Kissinger. The following is part of the Times' Nov. 20 editorial.

A word, on this Sunday morning of hope in Jerusalem, for the true broker of the Sadat-Begin encounter. For all we know, Henry Kissinger was as surprised as the rest of us by the overture from the Egyptian President that produced his sudden visit to the Israeli Prime Minister. No matter. The former Secretary of State recognized the irrepressible yearning for peace on both sides of the Suez Canal in the dark and frantic hours of the 1973 war. Daringly, to the extent possible, he maneuvered the battle itself so that each side would emerge with enough pride and incentive to move toward negotiation. He then demonstrated with his celebrated shuttle the opportunities for a series of deals. And generously, even out of office, he has lent his support and counsel to all parties to

preserve the momentum.

The Carter Administration has built on his record, of course, correcting a few mistakes along the way. It could not instantly replace his experience in the Middle East or the enormous reserves of credit he had built up in all the capitals of the region. His endurance of Mr. Sadat's kisses, and Golds Meir's lectures, has not gone for naught. Indeed, Mr. Carter could do worse than to enlist the former Secretary in the follow-up diplomacy to today's dramatic breakthrough....

Javits: Let's Wait Years

The following is part of a feature article written by New York Senator Jacob Javits on the occasion of the Sadat-Begin meetings. It appeared in the Nov. 21 New York Post.

...President Carter's concentration on achieving a real peace is a valid and most important element in the current favorable climate for achievement of results at Geneva.

However, the missing ingredient in my view remains the necessity of "phasing" the carrying out of any peace agreements negotiated in Geneva.

If there is to be any kind of Israeli withdrawal it could only be achievable in the context of secure and recognizable borders for Israel and a deliberate phasing in over a period of years which would allow for testing of the good faith of all parties, the growth of trade, social and political interchange which will breed mutual trust and confidence, and an opportunity for the Arab population on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip one day to determine its own future.

Phasing will be equally important with respect to the political disposition in any areas from which Israel may withdraw.

If the concept of some political entity is to be achieved on the West Bank and Gaza, it would first have to pass through several way stations to prepare the people who live in those areas for meaningful self-determination.

It is most significant that neither Sadat nor Begin mentioned the Palestine Liberation Organization, for the PLO is an external organization made up of Arab refugees living in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, the West Bank and Gaza and elsewhere, mostly in the Arab world....

...But from his own experience with the PLO — which in 1970 tried to take over Jordan as it later tried to do in

Lebanon — it is difficult to imagine King Hussein freely agreeing to the establishment of a PLO state in the West Bank.

Such a state could pose a grave and constant danger to Jordan as it would to Israel. A PLO state for the West Bank is simply unthinkable.

I believe that a period of interim administration, which will require some years, will be needed in the West Bank and Gaza....

...In addition, the PLO as a paramilitary terrorist organization must be excluded from the West Bank and Gaza in order to give the people there a true and meaningful opportunity for political self-determination — which would be impossible in the face of PLO coercion....

...But I do not believe that the President of the U.S. has the right to force Israel into agreements which Israel truly believes to be incompatible with its national security.

It would be morally wrong for the U.S. to impose terms upon Israel which Israel in good faith considers suicidal, under the threat of being cut adrift and abandoned by the U.S. even if the President were fully convinced in his own mind that the terms posed no basic threat to Israel's survival.

"As a Former President..."

Former President Gerald Ford took a Kissinger-type position in an interview with the Washington Post Nov. 21, 1977. The following are extracts.

...The former President expressed approval of the visit of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat to Israel. He said that the dramatic Israeli-Egyptian peace move was "risky" because of the high expectations it created, but added that the risks were worth taking in the interest of peace.

But Ford expressed "many reservations" about the Geneva conference which the Carter administration hopes will lead to a Middle Eastern peace settlement....

...“Our policy would have been to go to Geneva for ratification of what previously had been negotiated between the state of Israel and its Arab neighbors. That way you don't break down Geneva at the very beginning with procedural problems. If you go to Geneva without something to ratify, the whole conference could be a failure, and then there probably would be some very serious repercussions.”...