

Telcon - San Clemente
April 6, 1973 - 9:34 a. m.
Marvin Kalb - HAK

Kalb: Henry, hi, how's the weather out there?

HAK: Beautiful.

Kalb: Well, today we've had our first bit of sun in a week.

HAK: Well, it's drying out for me.

Kalb: Listen, I just wanted to check a story with you that is making the rounds here in Washington. Obviously in some connection with Thieu's visit. And that is that you told him back last fall -- I can only assume that they must mean in the second week of October -- that the US had some kind of understanding with the Russians to maintain the peace in Indochina and one way that that would happen would be for a reduction of war deliveries to North Vietnam and before this thing went any further I just wanted to have your recollection of it.

HAK: I told them no such thing. I have told him -- I mean this is not for quotation --

Kalb: Not for quotation but the story is kicking around - I wanted to alert you to that.

HAK: I told him in October which was the last time I talked to him alone, that we would make an effort to get the war deliveries reduced, which indeed we've made publicly. I mean that's not a very secret thing. ~~XX~~ We have stated that to be our policy. And that's all there is to this story.

Kalb: You did not tell them about any understanding. . .

HAK: There was no understanding. I mean there was no formal understanding. Our views are known and we are trying to bring it about.

Kalb: So that at this particular point is it fair to say that there is no current understanding with the Russians regarding . . .

HAK: I am talking about my conversations with Thieu and I said no such thing to Thieu. Now as to the state of our current discussions with any other country, I just don't want to comment on that. But our views are known, but I don't want to go into that.

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Kalb: So at this particular point, from what I understand, one, you did not say this to Thieu and secondly, at that time all you did say was that you would make an effort to get the Russians to agree to cut back . . .

HAK: To get all outside countries to cut back.

Kalb: And as far as the current situation is concerned, you can't talk about that? All right. Let me just ask you one more question. Is there any evidence that you are aware of that in fact the level of supplies has ~~W~~ dropped off?

HAK: Well, you see, ~~k~~ our intelligence is no longer as rapid as it used to be, since we've stopped the overflights. But I would say at this moment its inconclusive.

Kalb: Inconclusive in the sense that you don't have the intelligence or that . . .

HAK: You know, this has to work over a period of time, but we haven't yet fully assessed it yet. I mean we haven't clearly made up our mind on it.

HAK: Its not inconsistent with a reduction. Well, I hope there is a reduction.

Kalb: It would be a very solid achievement to be able to get them to knock it off a little bit.

HAK: Well, off the record just for your guidance, I think we are making some progress in that but the less we claim the better off we are.

Kalb: Listen, we're a chapter and a half away from the end of this. I tell you its an epic.

HAK: We are seeing to it that you remain a chapter and a half away from the end of it.

Kalb: Don't you date. Henry, I'll see you next week.

HAK: Are you satisfied so far?

Kalb: We've only had four readers. And as I say I still haven't done the Peace is at Hand chapter, the end. But that I'm starting next week and I just finished the Moscow summit. And four people have read it and they are fascinated by the book.

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HAK: Well, you've made the most serious effort, however it comes out, of anyone that I've seen work on this.

Kalb: Well, you can be quite sure that it's been a labor ~~xxx~~ love, commitment and devotion.

HAK: Well, that I know Marvin and remember it when I come screaming to you about being abused. Don't let me get away with it.

Kalb: No, I'll tell you one thing. I have a feeling that you're going to read this -- as I told you before, I'm not sure that you're going to accept everything we say -- but the overriding burden of the book by any fair standards would be one of two guys who are very much admiring of the performance of a third human being.

HAK: I know both you and Bernie have been warm friends. I've appreciated it.

Kalb: Well, we've always tried to be.

HAK: See you soon .

