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TELCON

Ken Fried/HAK

4/29/75 - 10:31 p.m.

K: Hello.

F: Hello Mr. Secretary. Ken Fried here. I just -- just as I was coming over to pick up the phone we moved a bulletin saying that President Minh has announced an unconditional surrender to the VC.

K: Is it true?

F: Well, it's from Saigon where we've still got our reporters. "We are here to hand over to you the power in order to avoid bloodshed." That's a direct quote Minh said in a radio speech addressing himself to the VC ordered the Saigon Army to stop firing and remain in place. Is that the way it was supposed to go?

K: Well, you know we didn't have that clear. No, that was not my expectation. Well, by Monday that's the way it was supposed to go. Yes.

F: By next Monday.

K: Yes. No, by this. No we didn't have that detailed of a scenario. By Monday. This is all background. By Sunday night Monday morning it was clear to me that this is the way the Communists were forcing it to go.

F: So there was no understanding but you expected it.

K: No, no. I expected late last week that there would be some form of negotiations.

F: As was indicated. So this does catch you a little bit by surprise.

K: No. Sunday night -- not because of an understanding -- but simply because of the way things were developing.

mostly was

F: Okay. What I wanted to talk to you about/more future stuff. As I say this thing just moved on the wire five minutes ago. I was interested in what I thought was kind of an ambivalent approach you took to dealing with DeBerry's question. I think the first question here in the news conference. I had assumed we would come out with some kind of strong statement about trying to redevelop American strength of policy in the area and I wondered if I could some kind of focus on what you expect.

K: No, we expect to do that but I just didn't think this was the occasion for a great policy pronouncement. You mean for Asia?

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F: Yes.

K: No, we will develop a strong policy.

F: Is this going to begin immediately at countries like Thailand and the Philippines.....

K: Thailand I think is in a special situation but the Philippines and certainly Indonesia.

F: How about China? What kind of role are they going to play?

K: We'll maintain our relationship.

F: I don't hear much enthusiasm there.

K: No, I think we have to develop. What the press generally does with China is to assume that something spectacular has to go on at any one minute.

F: That makes for headlines

K: I know, but if you analyze the problem simply from maintaining the existing relationships we are getting the leverage we want.

F: When do you say you're going to try to develop this strong policy in Asia on this. Without any apparent agreement by Congress to maintain any military presence in the area of any major part, how will this work. How will it develop?

K: I beg your pardon?

F: Well, I get the/Congress is still \_\_\_\_\_ when talking to some of these people about any kind of major American presence for a lack of a better word in South Asia and Asia generally. And ....

K: I've been up till 3:30 in the morning why don't we discuss that some other time.

F: Okay. I've been up too. So we're both tired. Okay. I don't want to keep you up in longer and I know you've got more important things to do.

K: That isn't the point. I'm still in my office. Good. I'll talk to you again.

F: Thank you.



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