



By KLU NARA, Date 5/13/04

Telecon
U. Alexis Johnson
1/19/70 10:40 a.m.

K: That kabuki play--I've had one complaint: You surfaced ~~the~~ a position they were supposed to surface.

J: At their specific request . . . Okay, we won't get into "who hit John?" I see, I see.

K: Well, the story I get . . . since no one in his bureaucracy knows of his commitment, he's got one hell of a problem. He needs some 'hanging tough' on our side (?). What he is proposing . . . he stands by his commitment. What he needs is a little help, like removing any reference to the word 'comprehensiv,' and the acceptance of some Japanese principles, which don't change the substance, but which they can point to as their achievement. Do you know what they are talking about?

J: Well, . . . our acceptance of their showing damage.

K: It doesn't change the substance though. My problem is the guy I'm talking to doesn't understand either. Their proposal is that it would be easiest for him to ~~ah~~ handle ~~to~~ it now if our ambassador were instructed to do the next round with their new commerce minister and do it alone--with no interpreter--since the man speaks perfect English.

J: But the new commerce minister doesn't . . .

K: First, there is to be no reference to an agreement.

J: No, I understand.

K: He says he will give specific instructions tomorrow.

J: To Shimoda?

K: No to their commerce minister. ~~My~~ Meyer should see him alone--be tough on our demands, but do something on the word 'comprehensive' and on some other unspecified principles, whatever that means. And then it will be settled soon.

J: Okay.

K: I'm sure this is clear to you.

J: Okay.

K: I didn't intend to get into it.



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J: No, you had to. Shimoda said it was personal from the Prime Minister . . .
He said Shimoda is the one to handle it.

K: That's what he told the President.

J: Yes, the word he had from the Prime Minister is what I gave you.

K: He said there would be new instructions tomorrow.

J: Well, according to how they wanted to play it--I've taken the position
that I'll handle it however they want to play it.

K: From where I sit, it's been handled with exquisite tact. They just
haven't been able to handle their bureaucracy.

J: I've been going through some charades to help them at the Prime
Minister's request. I thought it was okay. Now it's not any more.

K: Well, get him to see the Commerce Minister alone, and give them what . . .
the word I got specifically is that the substance would not be changed. He would like
a little help by being able to point to something.

J: Okay. Do you know Hira sawa?

K: Yes, I'm not eager to talk with him about textiles though.

J: He wanted to see me and you. It's Shimoda's impression that Hirasawa
"knows everything."

K: Yes, but we don't know whether Shimoda knows everything.

J: This is the problem. It's clear to me that Shimoda doesn't know about
the piece of paper.

K: No one knows about it. I talked to him and -- I lied to him--I said no
one here knows about it. We are just issuing directives from here.

J: I've told Armin.

K: He won't make a slip?

J: No, I didn't tell him about the piece of paper. Are you going to see
Hirasawa?



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K: If you think I should.

J: No. You have no word he's the Prime Minister's man?

K: No. and he had every opportunity to introduce this--this fella I'm talking to.

J: Okay. I'm seeing him on Wednesday.

K: If you feel after seeing him that he knows anything -- my man was imploring me that nothing be said about the piece of paper. I am sure he would have said this man was authorized to speak.

J: Okay.

K: You can't write history after you've seen a thing like this. Documents have nothing to do with it. It's a kabuki play.