

TELCON
Cousins/Kissinger
4:20 pm 1/15/70

C: This could be fine hour for the U.S.

K: Right

C: This is an opportunity to get at historical America, to unite the country. Could be done with blacks in this country too. Use imagination and involve both the public and private sector. Would suggest that when we see opportunity that the President convene private conference of heads of network and other media, foundations, peace corps, and army engineers to plan attack on problem. This could be even bigger than Hoover's plan after WWI. It should be combined rather than separate groups.

K: What should conference do?

C: Put challenge to media and relief agencies. Intensify the problem. Make clear what Government willing to do through peace corps and army engineers and ask them to join in effort. Would require about \$50,000,000.

K: Would Gowon let anything in?

C: The President could get Gowon to say yes. The French can't do anything but the British are doing quite a bit.

K: Should we do it in this way? Make it post-war reparations rather than relief?

C: Yes.

K: How would conference work in with Biafra?

C: Following invitation or agreement with Lagos.

K: When do you think we should call the conference?

C: 4-10 days from now.

K: I am convinced that we must make strong evaluation of moral concern and not just diplomatic problem. We can't just let these people die. The President agrees.

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C: Right

K: We have spent the better part of the day trying to find some mechanism to do this. Send me a telegram or letter, something quickly, with names of participants.

C: I would be willing to take a leave of absence to devote my full time to this. I've had past experience at this sort of thing -- President Kennedy asked me to work on the ratification of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

K: When can you send me the list of participants?

C: _____ days

K: This is very much on our minds.

C: This is a real opportunity for the President to improve access to certain groups in the U. S.

K: Frankly, the President hasn't been too concerned with that but he is greatly concerned with Biafra.

. . . . who we would ask to do what and what we want to come out of this. We would want you to come down quickly.

C: Thank you.

K: Thank you and I appreciate this.