

Exclusive Interview:

Former U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Scores State Department Manipulators in Mideast

NEW YORK, June 10 (NSIPS) — James Akins, former U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, warned that a Mideast war could easily expand into a worldwide war in a recent interview here, and harshly condemned Secretary of State Henry Kissinger's role in provoking just such a possibility.

"Your argument about the threat of an intended Mayaguez writ large in the Middle East is convincing," Akins told an NSIPS reporter last week. "My position is that there can-

not be a war in the area, however, because such a war will get out of hand, and it will lead to a world war — then we'll all get killed. My basic principle is that we're governed by sane men, but that premise may be wrong. You know, Kissinger once said the U.S. could occupy the Middle East oil fields! If he really thinks that, then he's dangerously incompetent." Asked about the possibility of a Mideast nuclear war, Akins responded, "I don't think Israel will use nuclear weapons for political ends — only if their existence as a state is at stake, a Sampson scenario." What about a takeover in Israel by the warhawk clique headed by (former Israeli Defense Minister) Moshe Dayan and Defense Minister Shimon Peres? "It's plausible, but not necessary. (Israeli Premier) Rabin, given a pretext, would gleefully move into southern Lebanon and more. The Israeli hard-liners see the present Israel as just part of Eretz Israel (the land of Israel - Ed.). The Israelis want the Litani River waters."

The "Kissinger Method"

Akins described Kissinger's plan to invade the Mideast oil fields. "This was about a year or so ago. There were rumors that there might be an attack on the oil producers by the U.S. In policy statements, Kissinger explained it away, and I did the same, saying that it was a truism, that any country faced with 'strangulation' would do the same, and so on. However, thereafter a series of articles on this appeared in the press. A coincidence? I attacked the invasion idea, and I wrote a speech for an appearance in Chicago in which I condemned the policy of invading the oil fields in the strongest terms."

"Well," Akins continued, "the speech was embargoed and classified by the State Department. It was never given. Later I learned that the rumors all came from Kissinger himself — had given a background briefing to a dozen reporters, complete with maps, charts, pointers, arrows, and troop movements."

Akins speculated that this was one reason why he was fired by the State Department early this year. "The other reason was my work to bring down oil prices," he said. "I thought it was public policy to bring the oil price down! What I couldn't understand is why we (the United States) were so reluctant to pressure Iran. They're given anything the Shah wants."

"Just think of those hovercraft, hundreds of them, that the U.S. gave Iran. Any they're not for invading India. The arms supplies to Iran are very disturbing. And you see, Kissinger goes wild when anyone brings up a moral reason for doing anything. Look at the way he acted on his Latin American and African trips," Akins said with disgust. "it's very cynical — he didn't mean a word of those fine speeches. That's typical of the Kissinger method."

Oil Hoax

Asked to elaborate on the question of oil prices, Akins responded, "Oil prices should have gone up, I've always said that — but not so far or so fast as in 1973. But oil is a wasted resource. I'm all for fusion power, but it has to be made desirable. In 1972, I proposed the formation of an International Energy Agency to coordinate the search for fusion power as an international effort, sharing technology and so on. The idea went nowhere. As a physicist, I was appalled. We have to move very fast on fusion; that's where all efforts should be concentrated. I don't know that fusion will work, but it's a necessary effort."

In response to a comment that the 1973 Arab-Israeli war was contrived by the Rockefeller-led financiers' faction to impose a global oil hoax, Akins said, "Your thesis is similar to what the French say — that the U.S. was hurt less than other countries, and that 1940s-style hegemony was restored. I don't know. I do know that my efforts in Saudi Arabia (too keep the price of oil down) were not supported. And the Egyptians were taunted with their impotence ..."

He continued, "I'll tell you a story. Last year the Saudis wanted to hold an auction on oil prices. Presumably the price would fall slightly as a result of expected low bids; there was a market glut. The rest of OPEC was outraged. The Shah of Iran sent (oil and finance minister) Amouzegar to see (Saudi oil minister) Yamani, and the auction was called off. I had a chance to talk to (Saudi) Prince Fahd — who was in London — and get the auction rescheduled. I asked for permission to go and the State Department refused. They said they didn't have the travel money! Imagine — for a lousy thousand bucks I was being prevented from saving the world billions of dollars!"

"After that I began to send in reports critical of U.S. policy toward Iran," Akins said. "In February 1975 I was warned: 'Stop the reports.' I asked, 'Why? Are my facts wrong? Are my assumptions wrong?' They said no. Then why, I asked. They said — ah? — this was (under Secretary of State for Near-eastern Affairs) Atherton, whom I've known since childhood — they said, 'Because you're annoying the Secretary.' Right, then I knew I was fired."