

'Second Hat' at White House Involved

Officials Deny Kissinger May Lose Adviser Post

9-18-74

By Murray Marder

Washington Post Staff Writer

Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger's ultra-powerful "second hat" as White House national security adviser yesterday survived a round of reports that he might lose it.

Published reports that President Ford had before him a proposal from his transition staff to strip Kissinger of his national security post, first brought this comment from State Department spokesman Robert Anderson:

"The secretary discussed with the President today this report, and there is nothing to it. There is nothing to the report that the secretary will not continue to be the assistant to the President for national security affairs."

In late afternoon, White House spokesman John W. Hushen denied that any such report was even submitted to the President. What is more, Hushen said, the President told him the transition team was specifically instructed not to go into this area of White House operations.

"Furthermore," said Hush-

en, "my understanding is that one of the President's first acts was to reaffirm his desire to keep the NSC (National Security Council) as his principal forum for foreign policy decision-making and to keep Dr. Kissinger as his assistant for national security affairs."

It is no secret inside the top levels of the federal bureaucracy that many officials envy and resent the fact that when Kissinger became Secretary of State in September, 1973, he also retained the White House post, which he had held since 1969.

The "two hats," as the dual posts are called, give Kissinger extraordinary power in Washington. He divides his time between the White House and the State Department. As head of the NSC staff of about 50 professionals plus clerical

government's interdepartmental national security committees, including such groups as the recently publicized "Forty Committee," which supervises

clandestine U.S. intelligence operations around the world.

Immediately after President Ford took office he announced that Kissinger would retain both jobs in his administration. Nevertheless, some critics inside and outside the administration have clung to the hope that in time the two posts would be separated.

There have been rumors, which were brought to Kissinger's attention by one of his aides last week, that a proposal to split the positions was circulating inside the Ford administration.

As a result, when the Los Angeles Times published a lengthy report yesterday stating that such a proposal was made by President Ford's transition team, it aroused considerable attention. The Associated Press followed with its own account that the

recommendation was awaiting the President's decision.

According to the Los Angeles Times' version, informed sources said former Pennsylvania Gov. William W. Scranton, and Donald Rumsfeld, United States ambassador to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, both members of the transition team, were influential in drafting the purported NSC recommendation.

Former Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird, and Alexander M. Haig Jr., retiring White House staff chief, also supported the call for a more independent NSC staff operation, according to the Times' report.

Scranton and Rumsfeld were both out of the country yesterday and unavailable. Laird could not be reached. White House spokesman Hushen said he asked Philip

W. Bucher, counsel to the President, and John O. Marsh Jr., a member of the transition team, about the reported NSC recommendation "and neither of them ever heard of it." Hushen said, "There is nothing in the final report given to the President which touches on the NSC" and there are "no recommendations awaiting any presidential action."

Interior Secretary Rogers C. B. Morton, the other member of the transition team, said yesterday in response to inquiries that "our final report did not deal with this in any shape or form."

If there was any such recommendation, said Morton, "it would have to have come from an individual—it didn't come from the team; I can vouch for that."