

Thomas Collins

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# The Traveling Press Stays Home

**Q. Is Herb Klein scheduled to stay with him during the whole thing?**

**A. Yes, Herb Klein, as announced, is accompanying Dr. Kissinger to Hanoi and to the People's Republic of China.**

**Q. For what purpose?**

**A. He is along to deal with any communication matters that come up, primarily to make sure that no communication matters come up.**

**—Exchange between a reporter and White House Press Secretary Ron Ziegler.**

Ron Ziegler smiled when he said that, but the joke was lost on the White House press corps, which was left behind when Henry Kissinger departed on a diplomatic mission that is taking him to China and North Vietnam.

*Thomas Collins reports on the media for Newsday.*

The only "news" people traveling with Kissinger will be a crew of Navy photographers and Herbert F. Klein, President Nixon's communications director.

White House newsmen were barred from making the trip unless they could arrange something through either Peking or Hanoi. Since there was not enough time to do that, the public is relying mainly on foreign coverage of the meetings provided by the Agence France Press, the British Reuters News Service and others.

There also will be communiques coordinated between Klein and Ziegler,

but judging from Ziegler's comments, they will be sparse. And there will be the handout photographs shot by the Navy cameramen.

The official explanation for the ban came recently from Ziegler, who said, "Because of the facilities we have available in terms of transportation and because of the nature of Dr. Kissinger's trip, we decided we could not provide transportation to members of the press." The White House also has inferred the Chinese and North Vietnamese do not want U.S. newsmen present, but hard confirmation of that has not been forthcoming.

The ban has been protested, in some cases bitterly, by individual newsmen, television networks and the White House Correspondents Association. Some see it as an ominous sign of things to come, namely, a stepped-up attempt to prevent newsmen from having access to important events. It is also viewed as one more example of the increasingly hostile and tense relations between Nixon and the media.

"It is going to be an entirely government-managed news story," said James Deakin, White House correspondent of the St. Louis Post Dispatch. "Here are the taxpayers paying the freight for the government's own camera crew, but newsmen who pay their own way are being prevented from going." He called the ban "punitive."

"This is a major diplomatic story," said James Greenfield, foreign editor of The New York Times, which has complained to the White House about the ban. "It adds up to a continuing tightening up all over." The Times, he added, has "tried everything" to get

its own coverage, including cabling Hanoi, but without success.

CBS Washington Bureau Chief Bill Small said he will be relying on whatever footage Swedish and Japanese cameramen may provide of the Kissinger trip.

## The News Business

The newsmen say there is not much they can do about the situation. Peter Lisagor, White House columnist for the Chicago Daily News, points out that the administration has no obligation to accommodate the press. "I don't get terribly exercised over it," he said. "The good pros are going to do their job aggressively. I think in the end we will prevail. If our own government makes it tough for us, so be it."

The mood he detects among the newsmen, he said, is "bitter resignation."

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