

# Diplomats Ponder Nixon Trip's Value

By Drew Pearson  
and Jack Anderson

For some time, members of the Diplomatic Corps have been debating backstage whether President Nixon's unprecedented trip to Europe, only one month after assuming office, will really accomplish anything. They note that he will be only half a day in Brussels, the capital of NATO, one day in Bonn, overnight only in Rome, a little longer in London and Paris.

The wonder how, in view of the time necessary to sleep, eat and go through a minimum of official protocol, anything worthwhile can be decided, or important talks even begin in such a whirlwind visit.

They also recall that Mr. Nixon, as a private VIP, has conferred with most of the European leaders before.

However, the general conclusion is that the trip can be worthwhile. American interest in Western Europe will be revived. The new President can sketch broad outlines of his ideas. Any sticky details will be left for subordinates to work out.

There is, however, one big danger in the President's trip. He could make the same mistake John F. Kennedy made, by heating up the cold war at a time when he very much needs Soviet support to help end the war in Vietnam, settle problems in the dangerous Near East, and head off the missile and ABM race.

In fact, Mr. Nixon may even need a certain amount of Soviet cooperation in Latin America where the Peruvian military have rushed to resume Russian diplomatic relations, signed a Soviet trade pact and are trying to inflame the entire South American continent against the United States.

Russian policy is a global

policy. If Moscow is following a cooperative line with the United States, it extends from North Vietnam to Cuba and Latin America. If it is not cooperative, there can be obstruction all the way from Cuba to the West Berlin autobahn.

## Dangerous Diplomacy

President Kennedy found this out when he spurned the very warm message which Nikita Khrushchev sent him on Inauguration Day, and declined to see Khrushchev even though the then Soviet Chairman offered to come to New York. Later, after Mr. Kennedy got into hot water with the Cuban Bay of Pigs fiasco, he himself initiated a meeting with Khrushchev in Vienna, where the Russian leader was cold. The meeting was a failure, and U.S.A.-U.S.S.R. relations skidded downhill to near-war over the Cuban missile crisis.

It was one of the most disastrous chapters in recent American diplomacy.

Soviet relations with Mr. Nixon started on the same warm basis as with Mr. Kennedy. On the day of Mr. Nixon's inauguration, the Kremlin issued an extremely cordial statement welcoming talks on all matters of importance. Mr. Nixon, it should be noted, replied more cordially than did Mr. Kennedy.

But he had previously vetoed President Johnson's plan to go to Europe to meet Premier Kosygin. Mr. Johnson Elect Nixon to come along. Mr. had even invited President-Nixon politely said no, also told the Russians privately he was against a Johnson-Kosygin meeting.

The Russians, therefore, were looking forward to an early talk with Mr. Nixon, after he had time to get settled in office. Instead he is rushing off to Western Europe after only one month in office,

to strengthen NATO, a military alliance aimed at the Soviet Union.

## Trouble in Berlin

He is also going to Berlin just a few days before a showdown between West and East Germany over the holding of West German presidential elections in that city. Already a serious diplomatic hassle has developed which could result in another showdown over access to Berlin.

Once before, both Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Johnson visited West Berlin at crucial periods with dubious results—LBJ when he was Vice President, and Mr. Kennedy when he was President, in the summer of 1963. Mr. Kennedy's melodramatic speech on the steps of the Berlin city hall in which he announced, "I am a Berliner," set West German wild with enthusiasm, but helped to undermine his own American University speech of June 10, 1963, in which he outlined a new policy of conciliation with Soviet Russia.

The big problem, which right-wing Senators don't realize, is that there is as much division over the United States

in the Kremlin as there is division over Russia in the Pentagon.

The most serious aspect of this division is regarding missiles and building the \$50 billion antiballistic missile system. Red army generals and right-wingers in the Kremlin want to go ahead, don't particularly trust the United States; just as the Pentagon and the new right-wing Secretary of Defense, Melvin Laird, also want to go ahead, don't trust

It took a lot of fast talking by Lyndon Johnson with Kosygin at Glassboro, and a lot of cold logic by ex-Secretary of Defense Bob McNamara, before the hard liners in the Kremlin came around even to willingness to talk about the ABM and missiles with the United States.

This is the biggest gain President Nixon could jeopardize by tomorrow's quick trip to Europe.

*Drew Pearson will predict what Nixon's European trip will accomplish in his broadcast with Jack Anderson over Radio WTOP at 9:40 a.m. and 6:40 p.m.*

© 1969, Bell-McClure Syndicate, Inc.