



# Suicidal Attacks On Kissinger

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**A** SUICIDAL IMPLUSE now appears to dominate the American political community. The simplest illustration of how it works is the mounting attack on Secretary of State Henry Kissinger.

In the last hideous year of the Nixon Administration, Kissinger miraculously kept the wheels of U.S. foreign policy turning fairly smoothly, while General Alexander Haig performed the same service for the wheels of domestic government. Common gratitude, you might suppose, would therefore protect both men from attack for awhile.

Instead, the rejoicing over President Nixon's resignation had hardly died down, when both men began to be the targets of every kind of snide nastiness. It has been an ugly business. In the case of Kissinger the deluges of snide nastiness can have really fatal consequences. In October, for instance, the Secretary of State must set off again for the Middle East, for another taxing journey with all the odds rigged against his success. Yet if Kissinger does not beat the Middle Eastern odds the familiar world will be in danger of early destruction.

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**T**HE REASONS should be plain enough to any sane man. The energy crisis and the October War have greatly strengthened the Arabs. In a matter of months, they will surely renew the fighting in the Middle East, if they see no satisfactory progress towards a postwar settlement with Israel.

With this grim analysis, the Israeli leaders are in full agreement, from Prime

Minister Yitzhak Rabin on down. For the Israelis, however, the concessions that may have to be made to the Arabs are all but unbearable. The result is something close to manifest despair.

Near-despair is the motive for the staggering Israeli request for \$1.5 billion of American military aid. Near-despair is also the motive for the Israeli desire to place unprecedented additional armaments orders, to be paid for out of Israel's own hard-pressed budget. And this near-despair in turn arises from acute fear of an early renewal of the fighting.

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**S**UPPOSE, THEN, that war breaks out again in the Middle East in another six months or so. Unless the U.S. placidly chooses to let Israel be destroyed, the Arab oil embargo will be instantaneously re-imposed.

Furthermore, the Soviet Union will instantaneously intervene again, in order to aid the Arabs in all ways the Kremlin considers reasonably safe. Israel's destruction may perhaps ensue.

Such are the prospects, which surely add up to a strong possibility that the world we now live in will almost literally come to an end. Kissinger's task in the Middle East in October will be to change these lurid prospects.

The question is why the American political community now tolerates the mounting attack on Kissinger. If the attack continues, Kissinger will surely resign. And it is always suicidal to let great public servants be driven from office.