

A Philosophical Kissinger Calls Criticism 'Inevitable'

By Murrey Marder

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Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger said yesterday it is "inevitable" that foreign policy will be open to greater challenge and criticism as the nation emerges from "the Watergate period."

Bowing to the inevitable, Kissinger struck an unusually placid and philosophical posture over the criticism he has received in Congress during the last two weeks. In marked contrast to his threat to resign last June unless cleared of personal attacks, which produced official clearance, he said in referring to the recent criticism, "I don't think it has affected my effectiveness."

Kissinger told a news con-

ference that "there was a great reluctance to have a challenge to foreign policy" when national attention was focused on the domestic turmoil of Watergate.

"As we now have a more normal governmental process," he said, "it is also inevitable that there will be a more normal debate on the subject of foreign policy. And I consider that inevitable, and in the long-term desirable."

Kissinger took one swipe at his critics in the Senate and House who have charged that he was trying to put himself "above the law" in the conduct of foreign policy. He glibed, "... I can't expect my critics to be right 100 per cent of the time."

The period "in which there may have been excessive restraint," he added, more seriously, "may be counterbalanced now by finding the more critical aspects. I assume that it will even out over a period of time."

Kissinger acknowledged yesterday that after nearly a year of world oil price crisis, U.S. initiatives have yet to produce enough of "a common view among the consumers" to permit joint talks with oil-producing nations and all the major industrial nations, although there have been separate talks.

The United States is still in the process of forming "a

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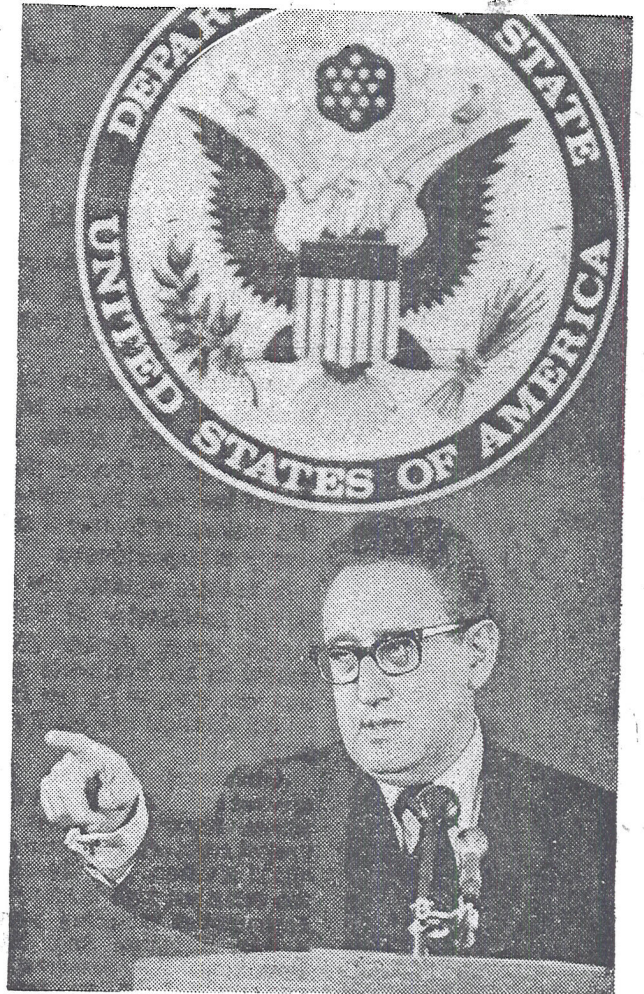
Kissinger: Criticism 'Inevitable'

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greater degree of cohesion among the consumers," he said. Although Western European leaders in Washington recently expressed great skepticism about prospects for driving down oil prices after meeting with Kissinger, the secretary maintained yesterday that he is "basically optimistic that we are making progress" on withstanding the economic impact of oil prices.

Kissinger reiterated his contention that high oil prices are "not inevitably linked to the Arab-Israeli negotiations," which he will pursue on his new trip to the Middle East, and that these negotiations are being conducted "in separate forums." He will leave on the trip at midnight tonight.

The secretary, however, announced that he is adding Saudi Arabia, Algeria and Morocco to his schedule for this trip, which includes Egypt, Syria, Israel and Jordan. In recent months the United States had hoped that a lead by Saudi Arabia would produce a cut in oil prices, but Saudi



Associated Press

Kissinger recognizes reporter at press conference.

Arabia was blocked by Algeria and other producers.

Kissinger, as he often does, discounted in advance any prospects for "concrete results in terms of agreements or dramatic announcements" in the Arab-Israeli negotiations during this mission abroad. Instead, he said, "the primary purpose is to give concreteness to the negotiating process, and perhaps to agree on some timing."

The secretary yesterday acknowledged considerable difficulties in two areas of U.S.-Soviet relations, while seeking to put both of them in the best possible light.

In addition to confirming that a large barrier has arisen over a compromise with Congress on freer emigration of Soviet Jews, Kissinger conceded there are difficult negotiations ahead on completing a U.S.-Soviet limitation on underground nuclear testing.

Negotiations began in Moscow yesterday between American and Soviet delegations to try to fill an important gap in the test ban accord signed by President Nixon in June.

That proposed treaty has two main segments: it would prohibit all underground nuclear weapons tests with an explosive force about 150 kilotons (equivalent to 150,000 tons of TNT). Also, it would exempt from that limitation so-called peaceful nuclear blasts for non-military purposes (earth-moving, for example), if agreement can be reached on criteria to distinguish between peaceful and military explosions.

This Moscow agreement was met with the outcry from American arms control advocates that the limit on military testing was too high to be meaningful, and that the exemption for "peaceful" blasts was "an enormous loophole." Critics warned that the treaty will never pass the Senate.

Kissinger denied yesterday that the United States is now trying to have the treaty "renegotiated." The agreement provided, he noted, that there would have to be negotiations to develop criteria to check on non-military explosions, especially over the 15-kiloton "threshold."

Yesterday, however, Kissinger left open the possibility that such attempts might end in stalemates. He cited "the difficulty of defining criteria for explosions above 150 kilotons." He also said, "The judgment of whether it is possible to develop these criteria can be made only after the negotiations have been completed."

Kissinger produced a new public rationale for agreeing, at Soviet insistence, to distinguish between "peaceful" nuclear tests and weapons tests, after the United States criticized India last May for what it called a peaceful test. The United States claimed that the two cannot be distinguished.

In the case of "a new nuclear country," Kissinger said yesterday, in the early stages of development, "it is very difficult, in fact, it is impossible to establish a distinction." In countries more advanced in nuclear technology, however, he said, "there are at least some cases in which criteria can be defined" between military and non-military explosions.

Kissinger again yesterday sought to minimize the rebounding controversy over covert political activities con-

ducted in Chile by the Central Intelligence Agency, on authorization of the "40 Committee" in the White House, which he heads.

"The 40 Committee, in one form or another, has existed since 1948," said Kissinger, the Department of State always has been represented on it, "and the final approval is in every case given by the President in any event."

Kissinger said "I believe that if one compares the scale

[of covert operations] now or the scale even from the late '60s onward ... one would find that the political direction has been tightened up and the number has decreased."

Critics in Congress, however, insist that such comparisons are irrelevant, and the United States, especially in the wake of the Watergate experience, must operate at a

higher level of international conduct.