

Ford Is Hopeful of an End To Criticism of Kissinger

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By JOHN HERBERS FEB 8 1975

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 7 — President Ford said through his press secretary today that he hoped Secretary of State Kissinger would not have to face further criticism by political candidates as he embarks on his mission to negotiate for peace in the Middle East.

The statement, a response to criticism of Mr. Kissinger by Senator Lloyd M. Bentsen Jr., Democrat of Texas, was read to reporters by the press secretary, Ron Nessen, shortly after Mr. Kissinger met with the President this morning.

Senator Bentsen, who is scheduled to announce his candidacy for President later this month, said in a statement yesterday that Mr. Kissinger was running a "dangerously constructed and convoluted" foreign policy, "with an undemocratic emphasis on secret diplomacy, personal negotiations and one-man authoritarianism."

Mr. Nessen at the news briefing read a statement in support of Mr. Kissinger that said in part:

"In view of the fact that Secretary of State Kissinger is about to embark on negotiations of greatest importance, the President would hope Secretary of State Kissinger would have the support of the American people instead of having to face such criticism by political candidates."

Thinks He Saw It

Asked if President Ford was calling for a moratorium on criticism of Mr. Kissinger by public officials running for higher office, Mr. Nessen said he did not care to go beyond the statement.

While denying that Mr. Kissinger drafted the statement, Mr. Nessen said, "I had a feeling he looked at it."

Mr. Kissinger is known to be sensitive to public criticism. At a news conference in Salzburg, Austria, last June 11, he said he would resign unless cleared of allegations that he participated in improper wiretapping of individuals. He said he could not

conduct foreign policy when his honor was impugned. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee subsequently supported his assertion that he had not participated in "legal or shady" activity.

Mr. Nessen volunteered the statement about Senator Bentsen's criticism when questioned about assertions today by Charles W. Colson, a former

White House aide under President Nixon who served a prison term as a result of the Watergate case.

Quotes Nixon on Kissinger

Mr. Colson, interviewed on the NBC "Today" show, said that Mr. Nixon considered resigning from the Presidency eight months before he did, but worried that Mr. Ford on becoming President could not control Mr. Kissinger. He quoted Mr. Nixon as saying, "You know, Henry really is unstable at times."

To explain what he thought Mr. Nixon meant, Mr. Colson said that in December, 1972, Mr. Kissinger advocated an immediate resumption of the bombing of North Vietnam when negotiations with the North appeared stalemated. He said he had seen a cable from Mr. Kissinger from Paris dated Dec. 5, 1972, that read: "Start the bombing immediately, those madmen have double-crossed us."

Mr. Nessen said the President had no comment on the subject. Mr. Kissinger, speaking to reporters after leaving his conference with Mr. Ford, said, "I will not dignify that with a comment."

The State Department spokesman, Robert Anderson, said records of that period had been reviewed and "the record does not support any part of Mr. Colson's statement."

"I will not dignify it with any further comment," he added.

According to Mr. Colson, Mr. Nixon on Dec. 5 ordered Mr. Kissinger to continue negotiations and the resumption of bombing was held off for three weeks until Mr. Nixon then ordered it resumed.

Attack by Stevenson

JERSEY CITY, Feb. 7 (UPI)—Senator Adlai E. Stevenson 3d, Democrat of Illinois, defending Congress against charges of inaction, accused Secretary Kissinger today of "terrible leadership" in handling the nation's foreign policies.

"His personal diplomacy is threatening to make the United States an apparition, make it a helpless giant," Mr. Stevenson said during a speech here. "Congress is guilty only because it has gone along with Kissinger's ideas."

He criticized Mr. Kissinger for what he termed a resort to secrecy, deception and salami tactics — "cutting her and there and appeasing no one."