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The Reason Kissinger Won't Quit

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Henry Kissinger says it would be a disservice to the country if he were to quit as secretary of state.

In an interview taped for broadcast today on NBC-TV's "Today Show," Kissinger said: "Right now, in these circumstances, to leave in a period of turmoil when people are looking for a sense of direction and when foreign nations are watching us, I think it would not be a service to the country."

Kissinger went on to say that he would stay on "as long as the President has confidence in me and asks me to stay."

"If I ever questioned that, I would leave very quickly and without any difficulty," he said.

Kissinger also rejected the idea that he should not be holding the job as President Ford's national security adviser while serving as secretary of state.

"If there is an individual who can handle both jobs and has the confidence of the President, the President should have the option of combining it (both jobs). He should not be forced to either combine it or separate it. He should have that option," he said.

Associated Press