

FORD DISCHARGES SCHLESINGER
AND COLBY AND ASKS KISSINGER
TO GIVE UP HIS SECURITY POST

MOVES A SURPRISE

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Rumsfeld Is Seen as
New Defense Chief—
Bush for C.I.A.

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 2—

President Ford has dismissed Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger and William E. Colby, Director of Central Intelligence, in a major shuffling of his top national security posts.

Administration officials said that the President had also asked Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger to relinquish his post as the national security adviser in the White House, but to stay on as head of the State Department and that Mr. Kissinger had all but agreed.

White House officials said that Mr. Schlesinger would probably be replaced by the White House chief of staff, Donald H. Rumsfeld, and that Mr. Colby's likely successor would be George Bush, the present head of the American liaison office in China.

Mounting Criticism

All these moves were acknowledged by officials and were generally viewed as a political face-lifting by the President in response to what he and his closest advisers regard as mounting attacks on the Administration from the conservative wing of the Republican party and from Congress.

Administration sources said that the President had offered Mr. Schlesinger and Mr. Colby other posts in his Administration but that both had declined.

Close associates of Mr. Schlesinger said that President Ford called the Defense Secretary to the White House this morning and told him that his resignation was wanted immediately.

The apparent reason for the dismissal, according to associates of Mr. Schlesinger, was friction between the Defense Secretary and the Secretary of State. The associates suggested that the price exacted by Mr. Kissinger for dropping his White House job was removal of Mr. Schlesinger, but this could not be confirmed.

Mr. Schlesinger, who had a meteoric rise from a job in the Budget Bureau to head the Atomic Energy Commission, the Central Intelligence Agency and then the Defense Department,

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ment, was reported by close friends to be resigned and philosophical about his abrupt dismissal, which came as a surprise to him.

As he sat down for dinner this evening in his suburban home in Arlington, Va., with his family and a few close friends, Mr. Schlesinger was reported by one associate to be taking the attitude: "Well, it's been done."

Jackson Criticizes Move

Senator Henry M. Jackson, Democrat of Washington, who is a friend of Mr. Schlesinger, issued a statement on what he called the Defense Secretary's removal.

"His abrupt removal indicates that the Administration cannot tolerate different views and honest advice on the most serious issues of national security," Senator Jackson said. He called Mr. Schlesinger "a man of courage, integrity and



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James R. Schlesinger

honor." His clear implication was that Mr. Kissinger had been behind Mr. Schlesinger's ouster, but this could not be substantiated.

Reached by telephone at his home, Mr. Colby declined to comment. He said any announcement of his resignation would have to come from the White House.

To soften the blow for Mr. Kissinger, officials said, Mr. Ford plans to name Lieut. Gen. Brent Scowcroft, currently Mr. Kissinger's hand-picked deputy on the National Security Council staff, to the top job. It is known that Mr. Kissinger does not see General Scowcroft as a type of person to build his own power position from which to oppose the Secretary's policies.

It was in the position of adviser to the President on national security that Mr. Kissinger, in effect, virtually directed the nation's foreign policies for almost five years before he was appointed Secretary of State in September, 1973, replacing William A. Rogers.

White House sources acknowledge that the reason for the President's decision to take away Mr. Kissinger's prized Security Council position had more to do with politics than with policy differences. As one put it, "I could give you a lot of reasons, but the best two are New Hampshire and Florida, the first two Presidential primaries, and our concern that Reagan will beat the President in both."

Former Gov. Ronald Reagan, according to a member of his staff, considers foreign policy a major issue in the campaign and has been particularly critical of Mr. Kissinger's policy of détente with the Soviet Union. Mr. Reagan and many others have also argued that Mr. Kissinger's control of the National Security Council and the State Department has given him a virtual strangle-hold over Presidential decisions in foreign affairs.

The changes come at a time when Mr. Kissinger has been awaiting the critical Soviet response to the latest American proposal on limitation of strategic arms in year-long negotiations that both the Secretary and his critics see as central to the future of détente. It comes, according to the White House officials, after months of maneuvering by Mr. Rumsfeld to crack the Secretary's power, arguing on numerous occasions that "Henry is now a political liability to the President."

Effect on Policy Seen

A State Department official who would not confirm the reports said: "Assuming it is true, it might start as a cosmetic way of protecting Henry and Ford from the baying wolves, but it could readily develop into a serious stagnation in our foreign policy."

The White House officials said that Mr. Ford broke the news to Mr. Kissinger early last week, but refused to say exactly when.

In any event, Mr. Ford's decision to ask Mr. Kissinger to give up his second post, and Mr. Kissinger's apparent willingness to accede, represents a clear shift from their previous public positions on the matter.

Months ago, as pressure was building to reduce Mr. Kissinger's responsibilities, Mr. Ford state publicly that he would not do so because Mr. Kissinger's talents were unique and because he was receiving sufficient alternative advice on policy from other quarters. At the same time, Mr. Kissinger let it be known that he would regard such a request as a vote of no

confidence in him and that he would feel compelled to resign from both positions if it were forthcoming.

The White House gave no hint of a change.

In Florida, reporters repeatedly asked the White House spokesman, Ron Nessen, about the reported changes, and he kept repeating, "I don't have anything on it."

Then President Ford emerged from the house where he was waiting for President Anwar el-Sadat of Egypt, and a reporter said, "Well, he must know whether Schlesinger is still in his Cabinet." Mr. Ford responded, "I love you all," spun around and went back into the house.

Officials familiar with the White House deliberations on these matters provided the following details.

Mr. Ford decided to ask Mr. Kissinger to give up his National Security Council post about two weeks ago, before the Secretary left on his trip to China, but did not want to make the decision formally for fear it would impair Mr. Kissinger's talks with the Chinese leaders.

2 Secretaries at Odds

In their meeting alone this week, Mr. Ford was said to have assured the Secretary that he would remain the principal foreign policy adviser. Mr. Ford then reportedly said that they both knew that criticism of Mr. Kissinger had been intensifying in Congress and elsewhere, and that perhaps the best way of dissipating this while still allowing Mr. Kissinger to do his basic job would be to have him relinquish the Security Council post. If this were done, Mr. Kissinger would be less likely to be accused of railroading policy, he said.

The sources either did not know or would not say whether Mr. Ford had taken the occasion to tell Mr. Kissinger about the status of Mr. Schlesinger,

or whether Mr. Kissinger had raised the subject himself. The two Secretaries have long been at odds over several key issues that are holding up the completion of a new nuclear arms pact with the Soviet Union, most particularly over how important it is to gain an agreement at this time.

One of the sources intimated that Mr. Kissinger made it his condition for giving up the Security Council post that Mr. Schlesinger be removed from the Pentagon. Others insisted that Mr. Kissinger had not set any such condition because he had never judged the Defense Secretary to be a serious bureaucratic threat nor a man who could compete with him in his relationship with the President.

At the same time, Mr. Ford informed Mr. Kissinger that he would elevate Lieut. Gen. Brent Scowcroft of the Air Force to head the National Security Council staff. This was intended to reassure Mr. Kissinger, since General Scowcroft is known to share Mr. Kissinger's policy perspective and is known as a straight professional who speaks his mind without participating in intrigues.

At the end of the meeting, Mr. Kissinger was said to have realized that the President was not giving him much choice in the matter, and responded that he would consider the request seriously. In the meantime, he is reported to have said, he would think about it and consult with some of his friends.

His main consideration in these consultations was said to have been whether Mr. Ford's move would damage his prestige as Secretary to such an extent as to make his resignation from that post necessary as well. He was said to have concluded that his standing with the President was still solid enough for him to continue.

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