

Schlesinger's View of Kissinger Described

By DREW MIDDLETON

In the view of Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger, differences between him and Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger on how to deal with Soviet violations of the first agreement on limitation of strategic arms were a major cause of Mr. Schlesinger's dismissal, according to a close aide of the Secretary.

Mr. Schlesinger has consistently been highly critical of the Secretary of State's negotiating tactics in seeking détente with the Soviet Union, which he has characterized as "a strategy of pre-emptive concession," meaning, in his view, that Mr. Kissinger was making extensive concessions before the Russians asked for them.

The reported criticism of the Secretary of State's dealings with the Russians focused on two tactical aspects of negotiations: allegations that Mr. Kissinger was reluctant to accuse them of violations and that he was overly willing to make concessions to them.

A Larger Question

The dispute on these points apparently did not involve a larger question—distortion of estimates of Soviet and American nuclear strength and deployment. The House Intelligence Committee reported Thursday that it had substantial information indicating Ford Administration attempts to distort such estimates.

In Mr. Schlesinger's view, according to the aide, his dismissal by President Ford was the culmination of a cam-

paign—mounted by the State Department and waged by leaks and calculated indiscretions to the media—aimed at weakening the Defense Secretary's position with the President and in Congress.

Another source, a high Defense Department official, said his conviction was that Mr. Kissinger's tactics in intramural disputes were to eliminate all those who did not agree with his views. The source added that the Secretary of State appeared to see any opposition as personal attack rather than as differences over issues.

Intensified by Bickering

In Mr. Schlesinger's view, it was reported, there was an honest intellectual difference between the two Cabinet ministers, and this was exacerbated by bickering at lower levels of the Defense and State Departments.

Other sources in Washington have suggested other reasons for Mr. Schlesinger's dismissal. These include his attacks on House Appropriations Committee for cutting the defense budget and President Ford's personal uneasiness in the company of the Secretary, an intellectual only too obviously disdainful of small talk. Mr. Schlesinger, a Defense Department official said, did not fit the "folksy" style of the Ford Administration.

Sources in the higher military echelons of the Defense Department express deep concern over what they regard as irrational attacks on Mr. Schlesinger's "realism" in negotiations

with the Soviet Union. From their standpoint the Secretary of Defense, when he had evidence of Soviet evasion of the first arms agreement, had no option but to put it before the President and the Cabinet. Mr. Kissinger, in Mr. Schlesinger's opinion, was reluctant to lay evidence of evasions before the Russians and repeatedly took the position that they had made a mistake or that an evasion, if it occurred, had not been made known to the leadership in Moscow.

Officers familiar with the tight Kremlin control over the military and civilian bureaucracies find this hard to swallow.

Satellite Photographs

From the outset, it was said, Mr. Schlesinger felt that when the Russians had been caught in an evasion they should have been charged with it immediately. To his mind there was no profit in sitting on the evidence.

A military source familiar with the negotiations said: "Henry thought they could be babied along. Jim thought you had to stick it to them—make them respect the rules at the outset or they would never conform."

Satellite photographs and other information convinced intelligence analysts in the Pentagon that the Russians were systematically cheating on the overall agreement including the provisions on antiballistic missiles, on concealment under the interim agreement of strategic offensive arms and on the deployment of a follow-on gener-

ation of "light" intercontinental ballistic missiles.

The most serious infractions, in the view of the analysts—a view shared by Mr. Schlesinger—were construction of illegal ICBM silos and of up to 200 "command and control" centers that can be rapidly converted to silos.

As Mr. Schlesinger saw it, Mr. Kissinger was willing to turn a blind eye to these and other evasions, thus weakening the American position in the negotiations and encouraging Soviet cheating.

The defense Secretary was also critical of what he regarded as the Secretary of State's penchant for making concessions before the negotiating teams had reached substantive questions. His description of this as a strategy of pre-emptive concession reportedly nettled Mr. Kissinger, whose irritation was said to be increased by repetition in foreign governments.

Mr. Schlesinger, it was said, felt that on the whole the Russians had behaved no worse and no better than they could be expected to behave. But he insisted in the Cabinet that Mr. Kissinger's reluctance to draw the violations to the attention of the Soviet Government weakened the American negotiating position.

Issue at Vladivostok

The Secretary was reported to feel that Mr. Kissinger's eagerness to reach agreement had become obvious to the Russians and that they adopted a "sit-tight" position, expecting—and receiving—further concessions.

The United States, Mr. Schlesinger is said to believe, reached a satisfactory agreement with the Soviet Union at Vladivostok in November 1974 only because President Ford rejected out of hand concessions Secretary Kissinger was prepared to make.

Those concessions, it was said, include allowing the Soviet Union more missile launchers on the basis that it had legitimate fears about the alleged threat posed by China and by American forward bases and tactical nuclear weapons in Western Europe.

Concessions to an authoritarian country to reach agreement on weapons have little to recommend them historically, senior military and civilian sources in the Pentagon emphasized. These sources said they were not involved in the Kissinger-Schlesinger dispute and were merely reflecting on the lessons of history.