NYTimes JAN 15 1972

# Making Foreign Policy

By ANTHONY LEWIS

LONDON, Jan. 14—On this side of the Atlantic the affair of the Anderson papers evokes the usual bewilderment about American habits. How can a great country conduct foreign policy when the official apparatus is ignored and angry bureaucrats then make open war through the press?

Well, American Governments have always managed with a quite un-European degree of disorder. It fits the size and character of the country. But this case does raise troubling questions: Even the strongest believers in press freedom can see that more than that right is involved in instant publication of the minutes of top-level meetings on foreign crises.

One view is that bureaucratic jealousy is the villain of the story. The argument goes like this:

Henry Kissinger has become President Nixon's chief of staff for virtually all of foreign affairs. He not only briefs the President; he conducts negotiations and oversees the execution of policy. His pre-eminence has much reduced the influence of the State and Defense Departments, and resentful

## *AT HOME ABROAD*

bureaucrats have leaked documents to embarrass Dr. Kissinger. That is unpardonable disloyalty to the President. The answer is to root out the leakers.

The diagnosis obviously has a factual basis, but the cure suggested is too simple. To say that the President must be obeyed is to beg the vital question: How does he secure obedience? A President's problem is to devise a national security mechanism that will let him make policy intelligently and see it carried out effectively. An Anderson affair indicates that there is something wrong with the mechanism. This was no casual act of disloyalty: it must reflect serious systemic strains.

The Nixon national security system, as it happens, has recently been the subject of two expert public appraisals. One, in the current issue of the magazine Foreign Policy, is by I. M. Destler, visiting lecturer at the Woodrow Wilson School, Princeton. The other, in November's Harper's, was by two esteemed former security officials, Leslie H. Gelb and Morton H. Halperin.

Kissinger plays two incompatible roles in the Nixon system, Mr. Destler writes: the personal and the institutional. He is the President's close personal adviser, communicant, agent, ad hoc manager. Those functions have to take priority, thus necessarily weakening his ability to manage the broad range of foreign policy issues and make the bureaucracy responsive.

"The pressure to serve Nixon effectively," Mr. Destler says, "encourages Kissinger and his staff to handle things more and more in-house." A few issues get concentrated attention. Others drift. The gap between President and bureaucracy grows.

No tears need be shed for bureaucrats. But they do have something to offer, if only their continuity and their proximity to some of the small, effective levers of operating power. That is why Messrs. Gelb and Halperin see a danger in the Kissinger structure's tendency to ignore them.

"The inconveniences of bureaucracy to creative leadership are well known," their article says—"as are the possibilities of creative leadership going astray. But the bureaucracy is not a monolith. In it are experts who might actually contribute something creative and help avoid mistakes. Perhaps more importantly, the bureaucracy is always there. . . . If [it] is ignored and is not persuaded by the President's policy, bureaucrats will undermine that policy—when no one is looking."

Anyone who looks at the problem in an undogmatic way must have a good deal of sympathy for President Nixon and Henry Kissinger. For they had to deal with a State Department bloated and disabled by long years of neglect and inept leadership.

Reponsibility does not wait upon the slow work of trimming and revivifying a Cabinet department. It is understandable that Kissinger abandoned his original stated intention of being a deep strategist for the President and instead set up his own tiny bureaucracy to conceive, negotiate and execute the most urgent policies.

A staff of fifty professionals, not dulled by habit or regulation: It would be the dream of anyone who wants to make Washington move. But fifty is too few to manage all the sprawling foreign-security arms of the American Government, especially when Kissinger is preoccupied with personal services for the President.

The result is as foreseen by Mr. Destler. The President, through the Kissinger machine, controls only those few issues "on the front burner in the White House kitchen." And even on those, State Department and other officials are so distant from the White House staff that they miss the crucial possibility of educating each other.

At meetings of the Washington Special Action Group, a State Department higher-up may laugh at Kissinger's jokes about India and Pakistan, but the Foreign Service men with experience of the subcontinent are not so easily going to accept that black is white. The burden of convincing them is a heavy one, but the attempt is part of the process of leaderhip. The alternative—to operate in a closed, self-satisfied group—is too dangerous. Someday a man of Henry Kissinger's intensity must accept the challenge of making the State Department work.