

# Two views of Nixon's blast

1974 was supposed to be the Year of Europe: the Common Market blooming into a major world force as the continent's economies rivaled the United States and the Soviet Union. But another war in the Mideast, rising oil prices and a new British government interfered. Then, last week, the Nixon administration got tough, warning its European partners of the perils of independence. The reaction is explored in dispatches from Washington and Europe.

## United States: Europe:

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The low point in U.S.-European relations, signaled Friday by President Nixon, is the result of a calculated American effort and "cheap political talk" on both sides, administration sources say.

They include in this assessment Nixon's statement to the Chicago Executives Club "That the day of the one-way street is gone," concerning U.S. dealings with the erstwhile Atlantic allies.

However, they also suggest that leaders in Europe have been playing their own political games for domestic consumption in a gamble that the United States would not seriously retaliate.

Nixon appeared Friday to have called their hand by stating clearly that the U.S. commitment to European security would depend on real cooperation in political and economic matters.

"Don't make the mistake of thinking Nixon and Secretary of State Kissinger hadn't worked out what was going to be said," one State Department source said. Nixon was not going off the cuff when he said, "We are not going to be faced with a situation where the nine countries of Europe gang up against the United States — the United States which is

Associated Press

BRUSSELS — President Nixon's blast against the European allies angered many Common Market diplomats yesterday who saw it as another example of U.S. determination to bully Europe into accepting American domination.

Nixon's threat that the United States might opt for independent trade and defense policies unless Europeans agree to closer cooperation angered and bewildered the Brussels headquarters of the Common Market or European Economic Community (EEC).

But in Bonn, West Germany's Foreign Minister Walter Scheel, who holds the rotating presidency of the Common Market ministerial council, made an obvious effort to soften the negative reaction to the President's speech to the Executives' Club Friday in Chicago.

"We must now try to see that we do not unconsciously become involved in rivalry over political questions," Scheel declared. He stressed the need for improved consultation procedures between the United States and Europe.

Scheel said Nixon had brought up old, unsolved problems.

The negative reaction to the Nixon stand was reflect-

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Europe

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ed in many European newspapers. The London Times called the President's statement "by far the strongest language Mr. Nixon has ever used about Europe."

The Daily Mail warned of "a trade war causing massive damage to Europe."

The Manchester Guardian said Nixon "has killed his year of Europe."

Paris' Le Monde said Nixon's talk of reducing U.S. troops was difficult not to call blackmail."

France's Le Figaro said the "intimidating maneuver

of Mr. Nixon will no doubt have the effect of weakening a little more the cohesion among the nine (Common Market) partners, who already have great difficulty in speaking with one voice."

The Algemeen Handelsblad in Amsterdam said the United States was confronting Europe "with the reality of its political and military position in the world — just as the Arab countries confronted it last year with the reality of its economic position."

Nixon had warned that unless Europeans cooperate on the economic front with the

United States, they would "find it almost impossible to get congressional support for troops at the present level."

The Europeans were still smarting from U.S. Secretary of State Kissinger's claim earlier in the week that the administration found it easier to deal with the Soviet Union and China than the EEC.

"Nixon and Kissinger seem to be going out of their way to prove the French are right when they insist on distrusting Washington's motives," one Common Market source complained.

"The American idea of cooperation seems to be unswerving obedience to Washington policies even when these do not coincide with European interests, as in the Middle East conflict," the source said.

European officials were surprised by Kissinger's display of fury after the EEC

recently agreed on a long-term economic and technical cooperation approach to

the Arab countries. They maintained Kissinger had been kept fully informed of what the nine countries had in mind.

The reason for the harshness of the tone Nixon and Kissinger have chosen to adopt toward the allies is not clear to Europeans, though some accused Nixon of using the issue to draw attention from Watergate and his many other difficulties at home.

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their guarantee for their security."

Underscoring that he was going beyond rhetoric, the President said he had called off plans for a trip to Europe to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and to sign declarations marking new security, economic and political relations.

The President seems to feel it is time to make the alliance members realize "he isn't fooling around," an official said.

"We want cooperation with Europe, the West is still the cornerstone of our foreign policy, and Nixon acted to shock the Europeans into more realistic actions that will help us all," he explained.

What is at stake is the level of American troop strength in Europe, a mechanism to handle such crises as the oil shortage and the huge levels of trade involving the alliance.

Nixon said Friday he couldn't be expected to hold off the already strong congressional pressure to cut back the 315,000 U.S. troops stationed in Europe without cooperation from the allies.

"In the event that Congress gets the idea," he said, "that we are going to be faced with economic confrontation and hostility from the Nine, you will find it almost impossible to get congressional support for continued American presence at present levels on the security front."

The officials also said there should be no confusion over remarks made by Kissinger earlier in the week to a group of congressional wives concerning the relationship.

While his words, made in the belief that no newsmen were present, were ill-advised, the officials said Kissinger actually meant it when he stated that the "biggest problem" for U.S. foreign policy is Europe, not the traditional adversaries.

There is no doubt that Kis-

singer also believes, as he indicated to the congressional wives last Monday, that Western European leaders are weak and driven by domestic problems they have difficulty handling.

Even though acknowledging that Nixon said what he meant, some State Department officials indicated the President may have been influenced in his language by his audience and Midwest location.

"There may well have been a touch of Watergate in how he said what he said," another administration source said.

Other officials, particularly those who work closely with European affairs, were stunned by the harshness of the President's words.

Kissinger, who leaves for Moscow next week with a possible stop in London, later backed off his strong criticism of lack of European coordination in policy and questioning of the legitimacy of their governments.

Kissinger said his remarks to the congressional wives in a background briefing were taken out of context and he was sorry.

"I regret them and I feel they made no great contribution to the Atlantic dialogue," he said.

However, Nixon, speaking to a generally conservative audience, then went further than Kissinger in castigating Europe.

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