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## Ford and Kissinger

# What Their Friendship Means

By Vera Glaser

Washington

Jerry Ford's warm-as-toast friendship with Henry Kissinger takes on drama and new importance as the drive to impeach President Nixon builds up.

The two men are quietly reaching for each other in the growing crisis, with the vice president boning up on foreign policy as if there were no tomorrow.

*They need each other-- as insurance*

Ford deadpanned that he is only "expanding" his interest, but an aide's comment was more revealing. He said foreign policy gets priority as "an area Mr. Truman found he knew nothing about when he assumed office."

Jerry and Betty Ford phoned the honeymooning secretary of state in Acapulco recently. Their friendship

dates back to 1958, a decade before Nixon himself met Kissinger. Mrs. Ford praises "Henry's warmth, humor and relaxed quality."

Should Watergate thrust him into the White House, Ford said he "certainly would" retain Kissinger at State but added his usual comment that he doesn't expect it to happen.

Ford is riding high with Republicans. Kissinger is the man Americans admire most in the world, the polls say, and House Speaker Carl Albert calls him "the best thing Nixon has going for him."

Summed up, it means that Jerry and Henry need each other as insurance. Should Nixon exit, an event guaranteed to shake the world, their personal security and the nation's stability would be at stake.

When Kissinger returns from Acapulco, he and Ford will resume their private powwows.

Ford also attends unpublicized breakfasts with Kissinger and a tight little group of Congressional leaders. A participant described them as "delicate, off-the-record get-togethers."

Ford said he wasn't sure



GERALD FORD  
"Expanding" interest

whether it was Kissinger or President Nixon who suggested the recent series of receptions given by the vice president at Blair House, which helped Ford improve his contacts with foreign envoys.

Ford recalled that he first met Kissinger 15 years ago, "when I spoke at two or

three of Henry's defense policy seminars at Harvard."

Ford says, "I get the same condensed intelligence documents the President receives every morning. I read them before anything else when I get to the office about 7:30 a.m."

He sits in on meetings of the National Security Council, sometimes chairing them.

In the last few days, Ford has indicated he could be "had" for the 1976 presidential nomination, and Mrs. Ford has said on national

*The private powwows are continuing*

television that she won't hold him to his promise to get out of politics by 1977.

The Jerry-and-Henry friendship will need to remain strong.