

WXPost

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR JUN 16 1974

*The Kissinger Controversy**The Government's Right*

I am amazed by all the fuss being made about the wiretaps supposedly initiated or approved by Dr. Kissinger. The Government of the United States, especially Dr. Kissinger's National Security Office, was being robbed blind of all its secrets and weakened in its efforts to deal effectively with foreign governments. Under such circumstances, the efforts made to stop the security leaks were essential.

A government has a right to safeguard its secret documents. Those who love America and are concerned about her safety will approve of the steps taken to stop the security leaks, regardless of the strange position taken by The Washington Post and its left-liberal supporters.

H.T. KEATS.

Hagerstown, Md.

The letters printed in this space today were chosen in an effort to present a rough reflection of the response we have received to Secretary Kissinger's press conference in Salzburg, Austria, last Monday. For whatever it may be worth as a measure of public opinion, our mail as of yesterday was running generally in Dr. Kissinger's favor, with supporters outnumbering critics by a ratio of two to one.

'One Emperor Is Enough'

So Mr. Kissinger threatens to resign if people continue to raise questions about his role in the wiretapping of newsmen and subordinates. We may perhaps be forgiven if we do not submit readily to such blackmail. If the Secretary's record of respect for law, Constitution, decency, and the right of Congress to receive full and accurate information will not stand the test of public scrutiny, we may not choose to trust him to conduct diplomacy in our name. Since much of his diplomacy is carried on through secret understandings and we have only his word that the contents are such as we can approve, we may well be sensitive to indications that his words do not always mean what they appear to. Mr. Kissinger is not, of course, out of step with this administration in regarding as an act of *lèse-majesté* any effort of the press or legislature in a supposedly democratic country to insure the public accountability of public officials. But, in my opinion, one emperor per administration is quite enough.

BARBARA J. FIELDS.

Evanston, Ill.

'Sleazy Business'

The self-righteous attitude of the news media can be appalling. Witness The Post professing moral indignation that Dr. Kissinger would stoop so low as to condone wiretapping. In suggesting that the end does not justify the means, The Post seems to apply a double standard—one for government officials, another for investigative reporters.

Is a government wiretap for national security purposes as morally repellent as the things reporters sometimes do to get their stories? Consider the dirty business they engage in: including grand jurors to divulge details of their proceedings in violation of the oath they have taken; using the leverage of stolen confidential dossiers to get public officials to betray the confidence of their offices; and even exposing informants to their own superiors when they turn out to be unreliable sources.

In their new book, Watergate reporters Woodward and Bernstein give details of how they got their information. It is a sleazy business.

Yet, typically, a Post editorial (June 12) dismisses out of hand the suggestion that the press could possibly be "more reprehensible than the officials whose possible misconduct is scanned." I suggest that the issue is an important one and deserves greater attention.

JOHN M. RAYMOND, JR.

Falls Church.

Disturbing Revelations

Henry Kissinger is no doubt a great man in many respects, and while his performance to date argues for his carrying on as Secretary of State, his recent reaction to revelations of his role in wiretapping is certainly revealing and somewhat disturbing. He is not the sole personal embodiment of our foreign policy. There are many countries whose problems he does not concern himself with, and there is after all a large professional foreign service keeping our foreign policy running. In many ways his reaction reveals the arrogance and delusions of godlike, above-it-all status of the Nixon team. He says he did not expect these kinds of questions at his homecoming press conference, that he wasn't prepared ahead of time to answer them. He should be like any other public political figure, always prepared for the unexpected and the unpleasant, not always a jump ahead of the press with precooked bland or evasive answers. He was caught pants down, and the naked emperor's counsel blew his cool. One can't help wondering if his skin wasn't already rubbed a bit thin by the Tad Szulc piece on his conduct of the Vietnam negotiations which also revealed a devious streak in this man of such remarkable accomplishment.

PIRIE M. GALL.

Washington D.C.

Best for the Country

I commend Dr. Kissinger for his ability to negotiate even the most tenuous agreement, and I commend the press for its efforts to present to us relevant stories.

But the recent confrontation between the Secretary of State and the press clearly demonstrates that far too often power takes precedent over that which is best for the country.

Is it not time that we understood that to permit total power to be exercised by any one man, one party, or one faction is disastrous. Is it not time for all reporters in all the media to use more common sense and responsibility rather than aim for a scoop or sensationalism.

ADELAIDE AVRUTIS.

Takoma Park.

'The Best'

I shall be brief, and I've never written in before, but as an ordinary citizen, I feel compelled to object to the ruination, by the media, of Secretary Kissinger. He's the best and our country needs him very much.

MRS. W. A. BUTKUS.

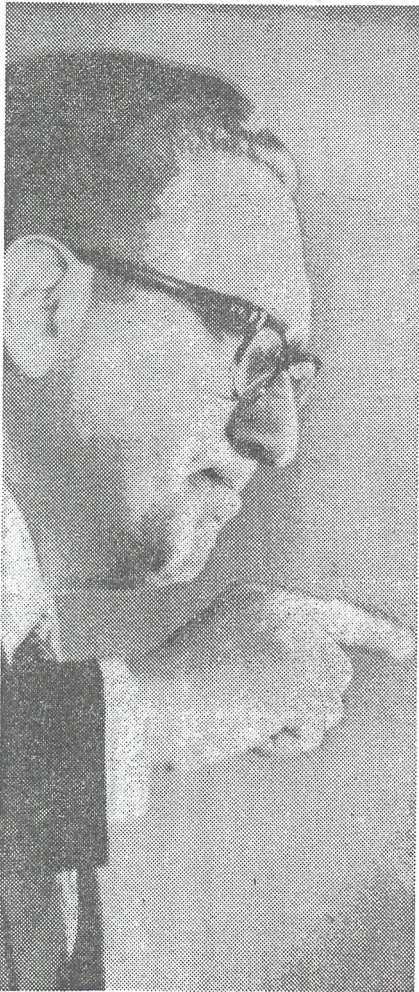
Silver Spring.

Better Headline

I suggest that the headline on p. 19 of The Washington Post (June 12): Kissinger: I Will Resign If Not Cleared, does not properly reflect the substance of the article. It should have read: Kissinger: I Will Resign If Not Cheered.

VIRGINIA B. HOWARD.

Bethesda.



Kissinger in Salzburg

Acheson's Integrity

Secretary Kissinger has threatened to resign his office when, for the first time, his integrity is questioned publicly by some individuals. He should be thankful he was not our Secretary of State in 1952 when Nixon slandered Secretary of State Acheson by referring to the State Department as "Dean Acheson's college of cowardly Communist containment."

ELSIE M. CABANAS.

Bethesda.

Any Quality Left?

I sometimes wonder what Eugene Meyer would think of today's Washington Post for which he laid the foundation. Calling Secretary Kissinger's outburst "silly and wrongheaded" and comparing him to a nineteenth century Austrian foreign minister is the sort of journalism that was common in the 30s and from which Mr. Meyer helped to rescue us.

I am reminded of Chesterton's remark that the bigot is not he who knows he is right—every sane man knows he is right—but the bigot is he who cannot see how the other man goes wrong.

Are there any human qualities in the Washington Post?

HENRY LEFEBURE.

Gaithersburg, Md.

'Henry Is Mad Again'

There have been only two instances Henry Kissinger has lost his temper. The first was when some yeoman no class was telling the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff what Henry was giving away on matters of national defense. The second was when Henry found out that somebody leaked to the American people how much he was giving away in relation to the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT). Now Henry is mad again, and we find out that he either directly authorized (by his own hand) or delegated it to his then assistant, colonel (now retired four star general—wow!) Alexander Haig the wiretap business of finding out who was telling the Joint Chiefs and the American people how much of their disastrous future was being sold out. The real truth of the matter is that SALT should be returned to the dinner table—and Henry should be returned to his "surrender" desk at Harvard University.

R. D. PATRICK MAHONEY.
Plano, Texas.

Leaks 'Outrageous'

The leak of the Kissinger wiretapping evidence is outrageous. Never in my life have I ever thought I would have a word of support for Mr. Nixon and his administration but in this case I think the continued leaks from the House Judiciary Committee violate the due process rights of those under investigation and reveal a Committee, busy questioning the integrity of others, losing its own.

Even more outrageous than the leaks are the responses of Committee members, first and foremost Mr. Eilberg of Pennsylvania. The leaks are disgraceful enough — but then to talk about them and express opinions about guilt or innocence is to turn the whole exercise into a political circus and not at all the serious and judicious proceeding it should be. This is all the more ironic and disheartening in light of all those lawyers that comprise that Committee who are doing their profession no honor.

I deplore Mr. Nixon's behavior and hope fervently that he will resign and spare us the horrors of impeachment and trial. I am convinced after what we have viewed from the House Judiciary Committee that the mockery of justice can only grow worse.

The Committee may very well have evidence that can end Mr. Kissinger's reign as Secretary of State and perhaps his career—Watergate has done that to many others. In this case, I hope the Congress remembers that we have very little left in this country to admire or respect. I am deeply concerned that in our haste to make up for the illegality and immorality of the Nixon administration we are applying the letter of the law too harshly thereby destroying the good we have left as well as that which deserves to be destroyed.

Mr. Kissinger is the single thread of confidence the American people have left to hang onto in their government. Please leave us something.

ILONA NICKELS.

Washington.

'Lay Off'

Please — Please — Please let Dr. Henry Kissinger alone. Just this once, lay off and forget an opportunity to destroy someone who is in a high place.

I know that I speak for millions of Americans and citizens of the world when I say that I love Dr. Kissinger as a brother and deeply admire, respect, and appreciate him for all that he has done for world peace. We, the citizens, need someone in government that we can look up to.

Do you always have to be tearing someone down? Can you not find some positive things to put in your editorials (about our government and the people who are in it)? A group of us on the bus coming home from work last night were talking about how sick and tired we are of this terrible negativism practiced by so much of our news media. It has been carried too far.

If you drive Dr. Kissinger from his position you will do a great disservice not only to America but also to the world and the cause of peace. If it would get you to leave him alone, I would get down on my knees in front of your office and beg you.

TOM R. HARRINGTON III.
Knoxville, Tenn.

'Going Too Far'

The June 12 front page story with regard to Henry Kissinger is a travesty.

I always felt you people would stop at nothing to manufacture a front page story, but this is going too far, to take a man who has literally performed miracles for the good of this country and crucify him in this manner. I tremble to think where we would be without Henry Kissinger and what will become of us if he does resign (and I would not blame him if he does resign), but apparently you people of the press don't care at all about this country because you are certainly doing everything you can to ruin it. Freedom of the press be damned for this.

I pray for Mr. Kissinger and I thank God for sending him to us and giving him the strength, courage and power to perform the great tasks and deeds he has done for us and the good of this country. As for The Washington Post, I say, "Forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Mr. Kissinger, we love you.
JACQUELINE NEWMAN.
Silver Spring.

Continue to Investigate

I hope your reporters will continue to investigate, and your newspaper will continue to publish, evidence of wrongdoing by all officials, including Mr. Henry Kissinger.

MARGARET K. EDSALL.
Arlington.

Playing God

I wish to compliment you on the publication of Marquis Childs June 11 column, "The War Against Kissinger." His statement, "The assumption of some reporter-commentators who direct their fire at Kissinger is that diplomacy should be treated like the police beat" reminds me of a column of his which was published ten or 15 years ago in which he reminded himself and other columnists that none of them was God and that each should be wary of playing God. His present caution to the reporter-commentators is timely and, if taken seriously, should be helpful to the press and the public. It tries to serve.

WILLARD L. BEAULAC.
Foreign Service Officer, retired.
Washington.