

# Kissinger's Shadow

*From a recent broadcast by Bob Schieffer on CBS Radio's "First Line Report."*

Guess who is in Germany to take a few days off and watch the soccer matches? Why Senior American Official, that is who. You remember him of course, he is the anonymous fellow who often shows up in various parts of the world where Henry Kissinger happens to be visiting. No one knows his name but we do know several things for sure. He apparently has wide contacts throughout the American press establishment because when he calls a news conference all of the important reporters show up, and one thing is absolutely certain, Senior American Official knows a lot about U.S. foreign policy. It comes as no surprise then that Senior American Official is in Germany this week since Kissinger is also there. Kissinger isn't talking while he is in Germany; he's taking a few days rest, but Senior American Official is talking.

In fact Senior had a long conversation yesterday with Murray Marder of The Washington Post. According to Marder's story, Senior American Official gave an assessment of the Moscow summit developments just a few hours after Kissinger and his party flew into Dusseldorf from Moscow. In his Dusseldorf interview, Senior American Official told Marder, "It is no mean accomplishment to hold the course of detente under the conditions that exist in the U.S." What Senior was talking about, of course, was President Nixon and he was also talking about the Watergate scandal, the threat of impeachment and the effect of all that on the negotiations. As Marder wrote it, this threat was inextricably implied in the negotiating strategy on both sides although both would deny it.

No American President has ever engaged in high stakes international diplomacy under such a cloud.

It was quite an interview and just another indication of how far he has come since he joined the administration—Senior American Official we mean. In the early days Senior American Official's main responsibility was to brief newsmen on presidential foreign policy speeches. Henry Kissinger handled that later on, but in the early days White House image makers were ashamed of Kissinger's German accent. They thought it would remind everyone of Dr. Strangelove. So the job of briefing the press on foreign policy fell to Senior American Official. In those days he usually went by the name Senior White House Official. It was not until Kissinger came out of the closet that Senior added the word American to his title. As Kissinger began to travel it was only natural that Senior American Official would go along, since he had acquired so many friends in the press during his White House briefing job. Since then his life has been a veritable whirl wind—Vietnam, Paris, Peking, Moscow, the Mideast, Moscow again and now Dusseldorf.

Lately "Pentagon source" has been furious because Kissinger and Senior Official have joined "not for attribution" in inferring that the military's lack of restraint had something to do with the failure to get an arms agreement in Moscow. In view of all this tension we do not blame Senior American Official for taking a few days rest in Germany. All of these fellows could use a vacation. Hopefully they will be able to find a nice quiet spot where no one will recognize them and where they can get some real relaxation.