

Kissinger Gets and Gives Apologies

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WASHINGTON, Oct. 16—Secretary of State Kissinger's remarks about former President Richard M. Nixon and other prominent figures at a private party in Ottawa have caused a spate of apologies to and by the Secretary.

A tape recording of his observations at a dinner in the Canadian capital Tuesday has Mr. Kissinger calling Mr. Nixon "a very odd man," "an unpleasant man," and "an artificial man."

The remarks were inadvertently transmitted to a lounge in the Canadian National Press Club where journalists were waiting to record toasts exchanged between Mr. Kissinger and his host, Allan MacEachen, External Affairs Minister of Canada. A recording was made by a Canadian radio reporter. At dinner, Mr. Kissinger also commented on the late President John F. Kennedy and his wife, and Premier Chou En-lai of China.

According to an Administration official, Mr. Kissinger telephoned Mr. Nixon late this morning at the latter's estate in San Clemente, Calif., to offer apologies for any embarrassment he might have caused his former chief.

Apology for Transmission

Mr. MacEachen, who read the reports of the remarks this morning, telephoned Mr. Kissinger this morning to apologize for the inadvertent transmission and he later told reporters in Ottawa that "he assures me that it in no way mars his splendid visit to Ottawa."

Apologies were also proffered by Mr. MacEachen's spokesman, Glenn Buick, who was responsible for the radio hook-up in Ottawa, to Robert Anderson, the State Department spokesman.

Apparently, until the early editions of the Washington Post appeared last night with a front-page article about the incident, no other news media had carried reports about it.

Mr. Anderson told reporters that Mr. Kissinger was "very surprised" to see The Post story.

The recording was made by Judy Morfrison, a reporter for Newsradio, Ltd., which originates broadcasts for 42 Canadian stations. She had come to the press club early to be sure to catch the Kissinger-MacEachen toasts and was surprised to hear dinner-table talk, including the well-known voice of Mr. Kissinger. The recording was of poor quality.

Above the subbub of voices, Mr. Kissinger was heard, apparently answering the ques-

tions about the quality of American Presidents from several women present, among them Albanie Morin, a Liberal Member of Parliament.

Mr. Kissinger is understood to have said that he thought Harry S. Truman, Dwight D. Eisenhower and Mr. Nixon were among the great post-war Presidents. Then he said of President Kennedy:

"At the time of his death he had not done anything very substantial. But Krushchev thought he was very decisive, I want to make clear that I liked him and in a way I even admired him as a person.

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After Remarks Are Taped in Canada

"As President for the first two years I thought he was a disaster. In the next year . . . very intelligent and he knew where he was going. He did get people excited. But what exactly did he accomplish . . ." At some points the tape was unintelligible.

Comment on Nixon

On the subject of Mr. Nixon, he continued:

"He was very good in foreign policy as President . . . He was a very odd man. He was very decisive in his own way. He went to the heart of a problem . . . No, because he is an un-

pleasant man. He was so nervous. It was such an effort for him to be on television. He was very nervous. He was an artificial man. In the sense that when he met someone he thought it out carefully so that nothing was spontaneous, and that meant he didn't enjoy people.

"People sensed that. What I never understood is why he became a politician. He hated to meet new people. Most politicians like crowds. He didn't like it."

Later on, the talk turned to Jacqueline Kennedy, and Mr. Kissinger evidently said something about her attractiveness.

Concerning his trip tomorrow to China, Mr. Kissinger was heard to say of Premier Chou: "Very ill, and I think he's dying."

Urged by one of the women present to write his memoirs, Mr. Kissinger replied: "Maybe someone will pay me not to write them."

As news of the dinner conversation spread around Washington today, several officials and reporters recalled Mr. Kissinger making similar observations about Mr. Nixon on earlier occasions. One said that he had heard them in the latter part of 1973.

See also KPFA News 16 Oct 75