

Adviser Runs a Growing Committee Complex

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 18—Dr. K., as the White House staff sometimes call Henry A. Kissinger, runs a complex and growing system of committees to manage United States foreign policy.

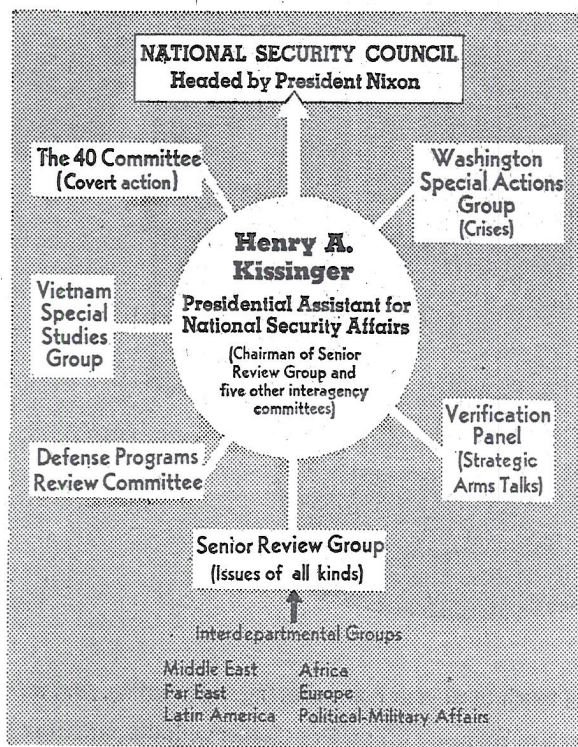
The office of the President's principal security adviser is preparing to computerize contingency plans and other vital information on world trouble spots for push-button recall. That will make the White House operations more self-contained.

The White House has put on microfilm the literally hundreds of papers that have entered the Kissinger committee system over two years. It takes business machines just to keep track of the flow of paper.

One glance at the budget figures shows how much more ambitious Mr. Kissinger's operation is than those of McGeorge Bundy under President Kennedy and Walt W. Rostow under President Johnson.

The National Security Council staff budget this fiscal year runs \$2.2-million, more than triple Mr. Rostow's budget in 1968 and two and a half times Mr. Bundy's in 1962. One large chunk of the increase—nearly \$500,000—is going for outside consultants doing research for Mr. Kissinger.

The heart of the Kissinger system is the committee structure, stacked up like the decks of an ocean liner, with the National Security Council on top.



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Just before the policy options go before the President, they are rigorously reviewed by one of the first-tier committees, all headed by Mr. Kissinger. Lesser matters are left to a different system—the Under Secretary's Committee, headed by Under Secretary of State John N. Irwin 2d.

The most broad-ranging of the Kissinger committees is the Senior Review Group, which deals with issues of all kinds. The others have

specialties: the Vietnam Special Studies Group, the Verification Panel (strategic arms talks), the Defense Programs Review Committee (military manpower and budgeting), Washington Special Actions Group (for managing crises) and the Forty Committee (for supervising covert intelligence operations; so named because of the number of the Presidential memo that established it.)

The core membership of all the committees is much

the same: Under Secretary Irwin or U. Alexis Johnson, Under Secretary for Political Affairs; David Packard, Deputy Secretary of Defense; Adm. Thomas H. Moorer, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and Richard Helms, Director of Central Intelligence. Budget and Atomic Energy Commission officials sit on the defense panel and other agencies take part as needed.

On the deck below are six interdepartmental groups set up on a regional basis and headed by an assistant secretary of state. Parallel, and often competitive to that, are working groups run by Mr. Kissinger's top staff aides and drawing on the best specialists throughout the Government.

More than one official has commented that Mr. Kissinger, who directs the traffic as well as setting the general intellectual tone of the discussions, can shift the forum if he runs into bureaucratic roadblocks on any issue.

On crucial issues like the arms talks, Vietnam or defense manpower, the working groups headed by Kissinger aides do the staff studies on which high-level policy debates are later based.

"With that setup," a knowledgeable official commented, "Henry has such a hammerlock on foreign policy that you don't get through any options that he doesn't think are reasonable. That doesn't mean he has to agree with you, but you have to prove to him, to his satisfaction, that you've got a reasonable case."