

NY Times AUG 24 1969

Kissinger Goal: to Clear the Air

By BERNARD GWERTZMAN
Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Aug. 23—Henry A. Kissinger moved quickly today to make known his hope that the final years of the Nixon Administration would be marked by an open foreign policy that would produce less friction with Congress, more information for the American people and some meaningful work for the State Department. The Secretary of State-designate was clearly trying to give substance to President Nixon's appeal yesterday to put the Watergate scandal aside and concentrate on the "business of the people."

News
Analysis

It is questionable whether the mood of the country will support Mr. Kissinger's call for bipartisan unity in foreign affairs, which, he said, "transcends any particular administration."

But in his news conference today at San Clemente, Calif., Mr. Kissinger certainly seemed determined to try to use his own prestige as the intellectual catalyst of the Administration to restore confidence in the Government and prevent serious erosion of America's image abroad.

After consulting with Mr. Nixon earlier today, Mr. Kissinger was like a peace-maker, issuing promises, seeking to create a new atmosphere in Washington.

'Partnership' With Congress

To Congress, instead of the bitter disputes of the past over Indochina, which Mr. Nixon revived as recently as Monday in New Orleans, Mr. Kissinger offered "a new and full partnership" to insure that Congress be involved in the making of foreign policy as well as the approval of it.

To the public and the press, Mr. Kissinger avoided any polemics and promised instead an open-door policy at the new State Department, asserting that we have an obligation to explain our philosophy and purposes.

And finally, to the State Department's foreign-service officers, a group of talented men whose ability was often scorned at the White House, Mr. Kissinger promised plenty of work and a large share of the foreign-policy load.

In nominating Mr. Kissinger, his adviser on national security,

to replace William P. Rogers as Secretary of State, Mr. Nixon has granted the former Harvard professor more individual power than any official has been given since John Foster Dulles ran President Dwight D. Eisenhower's foreign policy.

Emphasis on a Tune-Up

Hours after the nomination became known, State Department officials and others in the foreign-policy Establishment in Washington were speculating on how Mr. Kissinger would handle this new, dual responsibility. If confirmed by the Senate—something that is widely expected—Mr. Kissinger will have the sluggish State Department bureaucracy of 12,000 to direct, along with his own sleek, tailor-made 120-man National Security Council staff.

Details have not been worked out, but Mr. Kissinger indicated today that he did not plan any major overhaul in the foreign-policy machinery. Rather, he placed emphasis on tuning up and getting more mileage out of the old-fashioned department.

Mr. Kissinger referred to the foreign-service officers as "great professionals." He seemed like a football coach when he urged them to see a lot of their wives now because after his confirmation, they will be too busy. His words were meant to relieve anxiety at Foggy Bottom, where some officials were not sure whether Mr. Kissinger's new job meant new opportunities or another purge.

Two Sets of Problems

He indicated at the news conference today that he would keep two offices — his West Wing office at the White House and the spacious seventh-floor suite at the State Department. He will probably start his day at the White House, conferring with the President and the National Security Council staff, before riding the five blocks to the department to deal with the day-to-day problems of running the world's largest foreign office.

The problems of the head of the National Security Council and the Secretary of State are not the same.

The council chief is usually concerned with the more heady matters of foreign affairs. A major crisis must be coordinated among key agencies a Presidential speech drafted, a

secret negotiation planned and executed.

The Secretary of State, on the other hand, must deal with a dozen mundane problems for every interesting one. Position papers for coffee conferences must be approved, instructions issued to new ambassadors, Boy Scouts greeted, prime ministers of small countries entertained and business men listened to.

Some officials at the State Department have wondered aloud whether Mr. Kissinger, with his dynamic mind and incisive intellect, can stand the regular fare of the department. Mr. Kissinger certainly indicated today that he intended to be an energetic Secretary of State in his relations with Congress, the public, the press, and within the bureaucracy as well.

No More a Middle Man

This, in turn, has raised fresh questions about Mr. Kissinger's role in the Administration. As head of the National Security Council he was a sort of middle man when the State Department and Pentagon, for instance, had a dispute over military aid or some other matter. He could take the issue to the President for decision or sometimes act himself for the President.

But what will happen now if Secretary of State Kissinger gets into a dispute over policy with Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger?

Does Mr. Kissinger put on his other hat and make a decision whose objectivity might be questioned or does the matter go to someone else in the White House for settlement?

If Mr. Kissinger continues to make decisions for the President, his presence would appear to give the State Department added prestige and importance, but if he cannot, this would seem to weaken his own role as the Presidential adviser for national security.

Mr. Kissinger will probably need some time to work out a coherent policy to handle the problems that will arise in his new assignment. One official predicted today that it would take Mr. Kissinger about six months to answer all the questions now being raised in Washington, a city where style has often seemed more important than substance.

GIVE SUMMER TO A CHILD.
THE FRESH AIR FUND.