

Kurdish Rebels in Iraq Gave Rugs to Kissinger

WASHINGTON, Jan. 25 — Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger received three valuable Oriental rugs and his wife got a gold and pearl necklace from the leader of the beleaguered Kurdish rebels in Iraq who had been receiving secret arms from the Central Intelligence Agency, a House committee report disclosed today.

According to the final report of the House Select Committee on Intelligence, General Mustafa Barzani first sent Mr. Kissinger three Oriental rugs and later gave Nancy Kissinger the necklace as a wedding present.

The dates of the gifts are not in the report. The gifts were made shortly before a period when the C.I.A. was withdrawing its support for the Kurds and General Barzani was desperately pleading with Mr. Kissinger not to abandon his people.

Brent Scowcroft, President Ford's assistant for national security affairs and formerly an aide to Mr. Kissinger, said he recalled the gifts. He said he believed they were one rug and one necklace. He said he was sure that Mr. Kissinger had complied with the law and reported the gift to the White House gifts unit and that he

was confident the gifts were not in Mr. Kissinger's possession.

Mr. Scowcroft said that to his knowledge Mrs. Kissinger had never worn the necklace. Mr. Kissinger was unavailable for comment, but a State Department spokesman said that all Kissinger wedding gifts from foreign leaders had been registered and turned over to the Department of State.

It is illegal for an official of the Government or the President to keep gifts sent to them by foreign officials in their official capacity.

The Barzani gift is an ironic twist in what several members of the House Intelligence Committee felt was the most tragic and questionable disclosure in their report. The report has not been made public, but portions of it were provided to The New York Times.

According to the report, during President Nixon's visit to Teheran in 1972 the Shah of Iran asked the President to arm the Kurds against the Iraq Government. The C.I.A. and the Department of State had recommended against such action and Mr. Kissinger had supported their recommendations, the report said.

Mr. Nixon, the House report said, ordered the operation undertaken and bypassed the system of having it approved by the forty Committee, a secret subdivision of the National Security Council that was supposed to pass on all covert operations.

Under Mr. Nixon's orders, the C.I.A. sent to the Kurds millions of rounds of ammunition and a range of Soviet and Chinese Communist small arms that it had acquired in 1970. The total value of the support has not been measured by the House committee, but it is reported to exceed \$1 million.

General Barzani's revolt against Iraq went badly by late 1973 and, according to House intelligence sources, the United States cut off the secret support from the C.I.A. General Barzani, the report said, was given two weeks to "get his people out" before the Iran-Iraq border was closed and his escape route cut off.

A House committee source said that the cable traffic between Teheran and Washington during the early 1974 period was replete with pleas from General Barzani to Mr. Kissinger for help.

Mr. Kissinger and the Nixon Government spurned General Barzani's pleas and his forces were ultimately routed. The report said that thousands were killed or captured by Iraqis.

General Barzani survived and lives in Teheran.

The committee discovered a memorandum in government files dated May 20, 1974, well over a month after Mr. Kissinger was married and when the position of the Barzani forces was critical, that was addressed to Mr. Scowcroft, apparently from a White House official.

"As you are aware, the relationship between the United States Government and the [ethnic group deleted] remains extremely sensitive. Knowledge of its existence has been severely restricted; therefore, the fact that Dr. Kissinger has received this gift should be similarly," the memorandum said.

Mr. Scowcroft said he did not remember receiving the memorandum but the gifts would have been kept secret because they were connected with a covert operation.

In the week of May 20, 1974, the news media were investigating and reporting on official gifts received by President Nixon and Mrs. Nixon, but not reported to the gifts unit.