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Kissinger Scolded Ambassador to Chile for Talk

The State Department provided back-handed confirmation yesterday that Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger reprimanded the U.S. ambassador to Chile for lecturing Chilean officials on human rights violations.

A State Department spokesman, speaking for Kissinger, said the secretary "considers it a disgrace to the Foreign Service when members of the Foreign Service leak classified information."

The reaction was in response to a New York Times dispatch yesterday containing an account of Kissinger's rebuke to Ambassador David H. Popper for having raised the issue of torture and other human rights violations by the Chilean junta during discussions of military aid programs. Officials confirmed that Kissinger reacted angrily to an incoming State Department cable reporting that Popper raised the issue during a meeting on July 22 with Chilean Defense Minister Oscar Bonilla.

"Tell Popper to cut out the political science lectures," Kissinger reportedly scrawled on the official cable. A formal complaint to Popper was subsequently drafted.

Commenting on the episode yesterday, State Department spokesman Robert Anderson said, "On the question of human rights the secretary's concern, as we all know, for humanitarian questions is very clear."

Anderson declined to discuss the substance of the report, which he described as "an alleged confidential communication."

Repressive action by the Chilean military government has provoked severe criticism in Congress. Amendments to eliminate military aid to Chile have been introduced in both houses.

It was to these congressional pressures which Popper was understood to be responding in his conversations with Chilean defense officials.