

NYTimes FORD AD
Authoritarian America

To the Editor: JAN 14 1975

The drift toward dictatorship in America has apparently not abated with the removal of Richard M. Nixon as President. On the contrary, the movement toward autocracy received a double filip recently.

First, Henry Kissinger threatened war against the Arabs over oil, despite the fact that the United States is over 90 per cent self-sufficient in energy production and could be totally self-sufficient for centuries if we reduced but a fraction of our current waste. The Kissinger threat, born out of frustration with the failure of his policies in the Middle East, may also be designed to silence critics of his anomalous agreement with the Soviet Union to limit the nuclear arms race by increasing nuclear weapons on both sides. It is the penultimate stage in the "war is peace" game he has been playing for seven years, which has resulted in a perpetual blank check to the Pentagon, regardless of economic conditions throughout the country.

Second, the disclosure that the C.I.A. has been conducting operations against Americans at home has led President Ford to appoint Vice President Rockefeller to head a citizens' committee of inquiry. It may be remembered that, as Richard Nixon's special envoy to Latin America, Rockefeller praised military dictators for their empathy with the poor. As Governor of New York, he regularly bypassed the State Legislature through spurious messages of necessity, which enabled him to rule largely by executive fiat. He thus bears credentials as this hemisphere's most influential apologist for authoritarian government.

With a nonelected President and Vice President, a harnessed and ambitious Secretary of State and a CIA which has been whitewashed for domestic paramilitary activities, the dark tunnel at the end of the democratic way of life is now clearly in view.

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