

Kissinger vs. State

Rivalry 'Is Foolishness'

By Susan Almazol

The supposed rivalry between the U.S. State Department and Henry Kissinger, President Nixon's special advisor, is just "a lot of foolishness being written in newspapers," according to a top State Department official.

William B. Macomber Jr., Deputy Under Secretary of State for Administration, said in a brief interview yesterday, "the simple fact is that a small staff in the White House can't possibly take over the work of approximately 12,000 Americans in the State Department and 12 embassies."

Macomber, 50, who joined the department in 1953 and who has served as ambassador to Jordan, preferred to discuss the National Security Council to which Kissinger belongs rather than Kissinger himself.

Kissinger has played a key role in important foreign policy developments, including President Nixon's trip to China — a role which many observers think has weakened that of Secretary of State William P. Rogers.

Key Adviser

"If you read the newspapers, it seems that a small staff is substituting itself for the State Department. That's not true. The newspapers are wrong to say its an either-or proposition," Macomber asserted.

"They're both important. Unless the State Department is strong, the National Security Council can't do its job."

He conceded, however, "I suppose there's an inevitable amount of bureaucratic rivalry but the National Security Council can't function without the State Department."

Disparagement

The official, who was in Berkeley to address a civil service seminar, said it is "regrettable that people denigrate the State Department."

The adverse publicity may affect the quality of persons applying for the foreign service, he said.

Macomber was reluctant to discuss the attack on President Nixon's summit diplomacy in Peking on relations with U.S. allies.

He would only say, "in everything you do in life that's important, there are pluses and minuses. You have to carefully weigh them."

When pressed to discuss possible strains in diplomatic relations, Macomber reiterated his view of pluses and minuses and an aide brought the interview to a quick end.