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Tom Braden

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Creating a Bipartisan Foreign Policy

Henry Kissinger intends to wait out the current Watergate hearings and then embark upon an attempt to create a bipartisan foreign policy. Tentatively, his initiative is set for September.

He is already totting up the leaders of the opposition to whom he will appeal. Majority Leader Sen. Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) is on the list; so are Sens. J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.), George McGovern (D-S.D.), Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.), Stuart Symington (D-Mo.). So is Clark Clifford, former secretary of defense, and others who do not now hold official posts. To all of them, Kissinger will make the following three points.

First, that the Nixon administration has been badly hurt by the Watergate. Kissinger makes no pretense as to some in the administration that the Watergate is a Democratic plot to embarrass Mr. Nixon and that the President will emerge unscathed.

Second, that despite the Watergate,

the world must go on, and that because of the Watergate it may go on in a manner harmful to the United States.

If, for example, the President were to appear so crippled that he could not lead the nation in crisis, the Nixon-Kissinger detente with Russia and China could come apart. Russia might decide to take out the Chinese nuclear capability; China might decide to try to re-establish a common front with the Soviet Union.

Third, that the way to mitigate the possibility of foreign danger during a crippled administration is to present a common front between the administration and its Democratic opposition. In effect, Kissinger will appeal to the patriotism of the Democrats, asking them to rally 'round the institution of the presidency in order to strengthen the United States in foreign affairs.

What the Democrats will say to this approach remains to be seen, but one of those whom Kissinger named out-

lined to this reporter what he thought might be his own reply.

"If Kissinger is suggesting," he said, "that high-level Democrats might take positions in the Nixon administration, he will not get very far. That would carry the inference of approval. Stimson and Knox joined the Roosevelt Cabinet when the nation was grinding for the emergency of war. But the emergency this time is moral and economic. I don't think you'll find Democrats of stature willing to join up."

"On the other hand, if what Kissinger wants is an informal group of Democratic policymakers to advise the President, I think no one could refuse to serve."

Kissinger's decision to approach the Democrats gives added impetus to rumors that he may become Secretary of State. He denies that the President has offered him this post or even spoken to him about it.

Nevertheless, Kissinger cannot be unconscious of the fact that he is the only member of the President's admin-

istration who carries weight with Democrats. They admire him for his accomplishments and for his knowledge, including his ability to state it. Though they have disagreed strongly with his views on Vietnam, they do not fault him—as they do Mr. Nixon—for being unwilling to argue his case on a face-to-face basis.

Whether Kissinger's store of respect among Democrats would be enough to win him confirmation to the post of Secretary of State is an open question. In confirmation hearings, he would have to explain the bugging of his own employees. If he took public responsibility for this wiretapping, he would risk the opposition of liberal Democrats. If he told the Senate that the President had ordered him to wiretap, he might face a denial by Mr. Nixon.

But as things stand now, Kissinger's title doesn't matter much. He will make the approach for bipartisanship because he is the only member of this administration who can do so.

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Sen. Kennedy



Sen. McGovern



Sen. Fulbright



Sen. Symington



Sen. Mansfield