

**The Washington Merry-Go-Round**

THE WASHINGTON

**Kissinger Fears Effect of**

By Jack Anderson

The White House staff is in a state of shellshock. But no one is more distressed over the Watergate scandal than is Henry Kissinger. He's afraid it will weaken President Nixon at the same time that Chairman Leonid Brezhnev is gaining strength inside the Kremlin.

World leaders have a keen sense of power. The President came out of the 1972 election with a landslide victory. This not only meant he would be President for four more years but would be in a strong position to choose his successor. He had reached a pinnacle of power that made him more formidable in foreign affairs.

But now his power has been eroded by the Watergate scandal. World leaders have been quick to sense that the President is slipping, that he is losing his authority to commit the United States.

This coincides with a shake-up inside the Kremlin, which strengthens Brezhnev. He suddenly is stronger and the President weaker for their next face-to-face confrontation in Washington.

The last time they met in Moscow, most of the weight was on Nixon's side of the bargaining table. Those who have had access to the secret accounts of the summit meeting say the President profoundly impressed his hosts. Intourist guides still point out to visi-

tors the building where President Nixon stayed.

He also made a triumphant stop in Warsaw on his way home. The Poles have roped off the room where he signed a Polish-American pact as a museum and have bolted down the chair in which he sat. From Moscow to Peking and Warsaw to Budapest, the Communist leaders talk only of cooperation with Richard Nixon.

They still tend to dismiss the Watergate scandal as an internal matter. But insofar as it weakens the President's authority, Watergate will hamper his conduct of foreign affairs. At the next summit meeting, the weight may be on Brezhnev's side of the table.

**Magruder's Last Act**

Although Republican campaigners squandered hundreds of thousands of dollars on the Watergate follies, they have balked at paying the Smithsonian Institution a modest \$42,000 for the use of its halls as Inaugural ballrooms.

Ironically, Watergate figure Jeb Magruder's last act for President Nixon was to try to reduce the \$42,000 bill. On April 26, he called Smithsonian official Richard Ault and demanded: "These items seem to be a little high. How come?"

The world famous museum had allowed the Republicans to use two of its exhibit halls for Inaugural receptions and

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balls. Among the dinosaurs, ancient locomotives and other extinct animals and machines, the GOP hoity-toity waltzed and "twisted." The \$42,000 covered the costs of moving exhibits, cleaning up after the celebrating Republicans and for loss of revenue from the museum's shops.

Ault checked with his estimators but, as he told us, "we're not running the Shoreham Hotel annex." So he backed his staff's original billing.

"The account rendered," he wrote Magruder, "is indeed nominal and very much in line with normal practices for events held in the Smithsonian buildings."