

Kissinger Speaks on 'Plumbers'

By Marilyn Berger
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Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger yesterday gave the Senate Foreign Relations Committee a further explanation of his relationship with the "plumbers" and with David Young, one of his former staffers, who is now under indictment.

Appearing before the committee to discuss the recently concluded disengagement agreement between Israel and Egypt that he mediated, Kissinger volunteered an almost hour-long statement about Young and his probe of "leaks" from the National Security Council.

Remarks Kissinger made in his press conference last week had raised questions about whether his admission that he had heard a tape of Young interrogating Adm. Robert O. Welander conflicted with testimony the secretary gave during his confirmation hearings that he had been unaware of the existence of the plumbers and of Young's activities.

"I'm satisfied with his statement," Senate Foreign Relations Committee chairman J.W. Fulbright (D-Ark.) said after the closed hearing.

Fulbright said Kissinger's statement would be released later in the week after it is "sanitized"—that the entire substance of the remarks would be made public after the "syntax is cleaned up" and extraneous comments are expunged.

Other senators, including Charles Percy (R-Ill.) George McGovern (D-S. Dak.) and Gale W. McGee (D-Wyo.) echoed the chairman's remarks, saying there was no conflict between what Kissinger had told the committee at the time of his confirmation hearings and his later acknowledgment that he had listened to a tape of Young's interrogation of Welander.



By Joe Heiberg—The Washington Post

Sen. Fulbright (D-Ark.) and Secretary of State Kissinger talk with newsmen.

Fulbright said Kissinger had discussed the recent Middle East negotiations at length. "All of us are very encouraged by the progress made toward a settlement of the Middle East conflict," Fulbright said.

McGee said he was satisfied that Kissinger had made no new commitments to either side. "There are no due bills," McGee asserted. He added that Kissinger had pledged to consult with the appropriate committees of Congress, in advance, if either Israel or Egypt calls on the United States in case of violations of the disengagement agreement.

Kissinger told reporters after the three-hour session that the United States is doing its "utmost" to "encourage negotiations between Syria and Israel on the disengagement of forces."

The secretary also said he did not believe that Arab pressure would interfere with convening the conference of oil-consuming nations that is scheduled for Feb. 11 in Washington. Saudi Arabian oil minister Sheikh Zaki Yamani has warned the consumers against confrontation with the producing countries.

Fulbright said that as prog-

ress is made toward a Middle East settlement there is "a very good chance" that the oil embargo would be lifted and that there could be "realistic" negotiations on pricing.

In the course of the hearings, Fulbright said, the committee members urged Kissinger to take a new look at relations with Cuba. A number of members feel, Fulbright told reporters, that the "State Department for the last seven, eight, 10 or 12 years has been too inflexible . . . Many of us feel it is high time for a change in attitude toward Cuba."