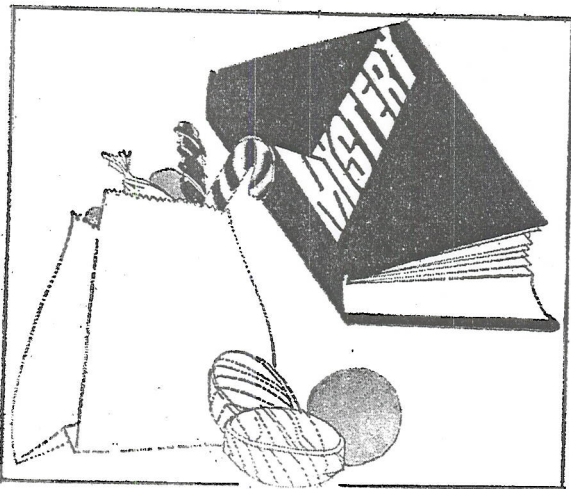


The Drip-Dry Constitution of Henry Kissinger



Washington

In case you're wondering how Henry Kissinger zips through time zones like some diplomatic Houdini, shuttling between warring nations and plunging into the most serious negotiations after 12-hour flights, you can do it too. Just bring along a chessboard, some pocket mystery novels, a single bed, a bag of candy and an extra-large ego.

"Henry goes on sheer love of himself," says UPI's White House correspondent, Helen Thomas, who has ac-

companied Kissinger on his global gallops. "It's the conquering hero. His momentum is built on his own sense of self-fulfillment."

But aside from ego, Kissinger has the rare ability of ignoring jet lag. It is customary for flying VIPs to spend at least a day recuperating from that systemic traveler's affliction known as "the drags."

Not Kissinger.

Why? It's just the way he is, said members of his staff. "Instant stamina," said State Department coun-

selor Helmut Sonnenfeldt. "Incredible psychological capability of not being bothered by space and time change," said Dick Solomon. "It kills me, but it's true. It just doesn't seem to affect him at all," said George Vest.

"He's got built-in stamina," said Winston Lord, Kissinger's right-hand aide. "The last trip he got off the plane and went right into meetings. Some trips he gets to stop off at the ambassador's house to freshen up, or he might make an overnight stay, like we did in Hawaii before going into China, but

it doesn't really make any difference."

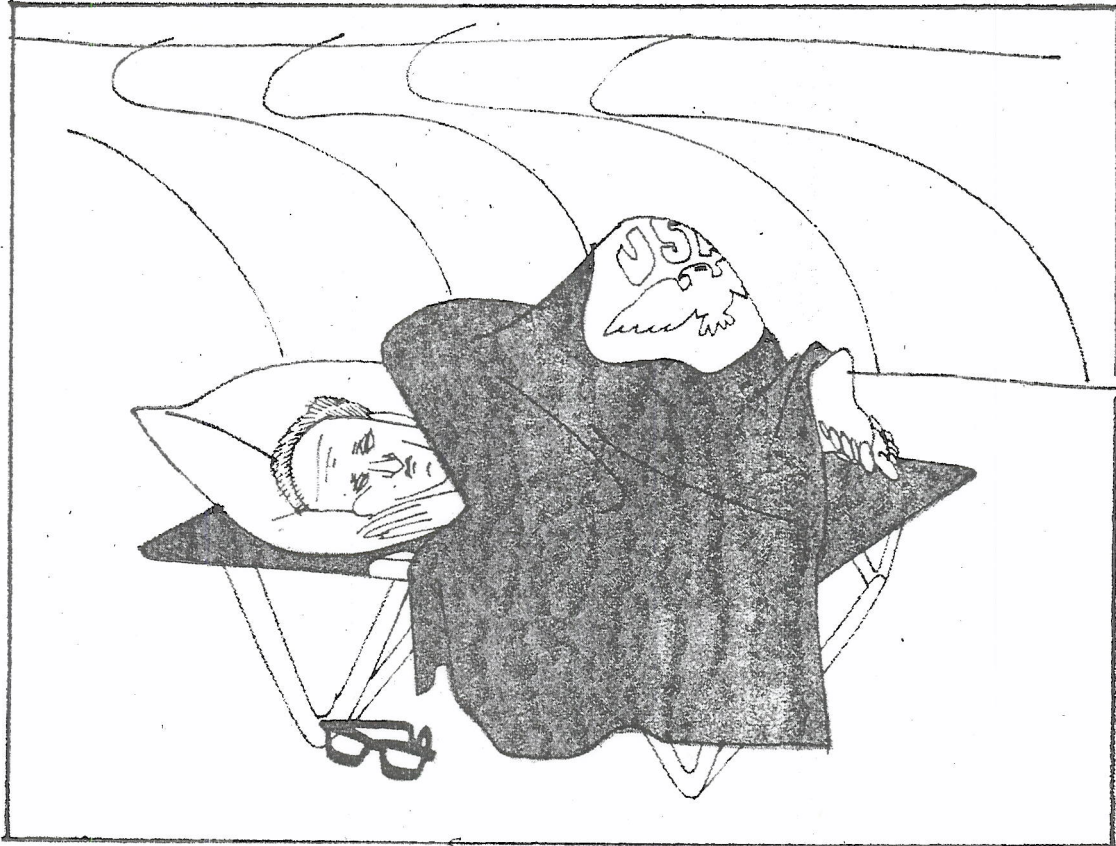
Basically its constitutional, but Kissinger's get-up-and-go is due, also, to the ability to relax completely.

"He'll work for hours at a stretch," said Lord. "He'll handle cables, read briefing books, talk, read messages, discuss strategy. But then he'll switch to studying chess moves from a book and playing chess alone on one of those small portable chess sets with the pegs."

Reading is another diversion. Kissinger may shift his interest from the threats of Sheik Al Yamani to some 50-cent pocket mystery, or a copy of Foreign Affairs, "unrelated stuff to clear his mind," explained Lord.

He thinks things through while he reads a detective story or novel, said Solomon: "It distracts him while he lets things pull together in his subconscious."

Kissinger is the master of



the catnap. "He can doze for 15 minutes or a half-hour, sitting up," said Lord. "and he very often uses the bed in the back of the plane for a couple of hours."

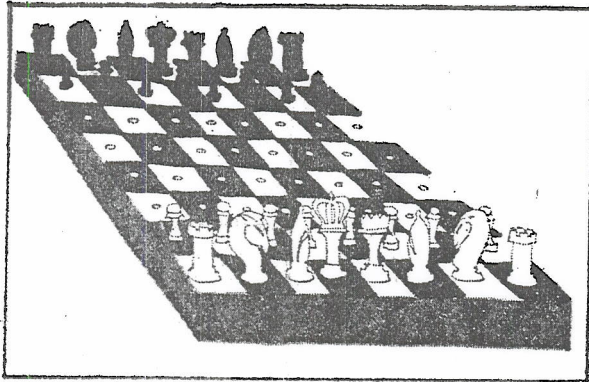
It's a single bed. Pull-out variety.

Henry doesn't require a great deal of sleep anyway, they say.

"The night of the military alert in the Mideast he went to bed at 3 a.m. and was up

most organized people I know. When he gets on a plane for a long trip, he figures out what he wants everyone to do, tells you and checks on you. If he goes to sleep, he'll come out after he wakes up and finds out just what's been done."

No one has ever seen Kissinger pop sleeping pills, cold pills, downers, uppers or even aspirin. But Helen Thomas says he pops candy



at 7 a.m. and seemed perfectly normal," said Thomas. "And after all that pressure, we arrived home on a Friday night and he went to the ballgame on Sunday. He doesn't seem to tire unless things are getting to him.

"He was tired of resolution 242, the 1967 cease-fire resolution which the Arabs wanted. He said if he was asked about that one more time, he'd go out of his mind. And he gets blue if things are not going right and he thinks he hasn't sewed it up."

"He can go to sleep like that," said Vest, snapping his fingers. Vest, who accompanied Kissinger on his Mideast shuttle negotiations, said, "he wakes up just like that and picks up where we left off. He's one of those people who knows how to make the most of both sleep and work. He's one of the

like crazy. "There's always a candy dish on Air Force One for people to help themselves. Henry'd go at it voraciously. And he always puts on a wide girth on those trips that he worries about. He eats compulsively on the banquet circuit when he's away, out of sheer nervousness."

"He doesn't drink as a rule," said Vest, "maybe a little wine, but ordinarily he'll just have a diet Fresca or a Coke. But he eats everything. He'll get a tray along with everyone else on board and there's never anything left."

Henry's only been sick one day while traveling. He had a bad cold coming back from the November-December 1973 Mideast trip, but it didn't stop him. Henry got off the plane with a runny nose, but was back in the office the next work day. He's never missed a day.

"It's sheer intensity," said Vest. "It doesn't matter if you turn him loose on the Temples of Luxor, or the Prado or the Mideast negotiations. It's incredible drive."

"I don't know what it is," said Kissinger. "I suppose one day it will all catch up with me." But until that day comes, Kissinger takes the prize as super traveler.

Of course, having all his hotel reservations, meals and laundry taken care of for him frees Kissinger's mind for the task at hand. While those traveling with him — like Vest and Lord — rinse out their own drip-dry shirts, Henry's laundry is taken care of every day by his staff. (He takes his laundry to the White House when he's home.)

When Kissinger is feeling frazzled, he can go to the back of the plane, shave, change his suit and feel ready for the meeting with the Shah of Iran or Anwar Sadat. While the accompanying press corps and staff are pounding away on typewriters, Henry's catnapping.

"It's just like being on a political campaign," said Miss Thomas. "You go to sleep when you get back. We went to ten countries in 12 days. You'd be up and do four hours in a country, and off again. In all that time I got one good night's sleep; but you just keep on going."

"No question, it's a hell of a task," said Vest. "It's work, eat, work, talk, work. There have been times I didn't think I could survive another minute. But you wouldn't do it if you didn't think it was worth it. It's not the money. No foreign service officer goes into this business for the money. But to be associated with a mover and doer like this is worth any effort."

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