

Kissinger Threatens to Resign Unless Cleared in Phone Taps; Says His Credibility is at Issue. [5 cols.]

SENATORS WILL ACT

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Panel Will Review the Testimony Secretary Gave Last Fall

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WASHINGTON, June 11 —

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee agreed unanimously today to accept Secretary of State Kissinger's request for a review of his testimony on national security wiretaps.

As a number of Democrats and Republicans on the committee and elsewhere in Congress expressed support for Mr. Kissinger and urged him not to resign, the committee reacted quickly to a letter from him seeking a review of information given to the committee at his confirmation hearings last September.

"The innuendoes which now imply that new evidence contradicting my testimony has come to light are without foundation," Mr. Kissinger said in his letter, which was dated yesterday, the day he left Washington with President Nixon for a nine-day trip to the Middle East.

Ready to Appear

Mr. Kissinger said that he had no reason to change his testimony "in any particular" but added, "At this sensitive period, I feel it important that the committee which first examined the evidence, and which has a special concern with the conduct of foreign affairs, should have an opportunity to review it once again."

Mr. Kissinger said that he would not object if the committee wanted "to examine relevant security files and reports on wiretaps sent to my office" and that he stood ready "to appear at any time."

Senator J. W. Fulbright, Democrat of Arkansas, who is chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, said that he

"We are going to renew that request," Mr. Fulbright said.

Committee aides said that the Justice Department declined last month to furnish the information because of a pending lawsuit brought against Mr. Kissinger and others by Morton H. Halperin, a former member of the staff of the National Security Council whose phone was among those known to have been wiretapped.

The aides stressed that the committee was not seeking transcripts of the wiretaps but the documentation that had authorized them.

Last September, two members of the committee, Senator John J. Sparkman, Democrat of Alabama, and Clifford P. Case, Republican of New Jersey, reviewed Federal Bureau of Investigation summaries of the 17 wiretaps and concluded that Mr. Kissinger's role in the wiretapping "was not such as to bar him from confirmation" as Secretary of State.

Members of the committee questioned Mr. Kissinger as recently as last Friday, and he

repeatedly denied that he had initiated the wiretapping.

Mr. Fulbright, who was presiding over this first meeting of the committee since losing his recent primary election for renomination, said that he hoped Mr. Kissinger would not resign. He said that a resignation would have a "very bad effect" on the nation's foreign policy.

Ethics of News Media

Mr. Muskie said to reporters: "The Secretary of State has been a brilliant servant, and his record deserves the support of his countrymen until there is a record to show the contrary."

'Working Too Hard'

Senators Hubert H. Humphrey, Democrat of Minnesota, and Jacob K. Javits, Republican of New York, suggested that Mr. Kissinger's threat to resign may have been caused by fatigue.

"I think he's tired and has been working too hard," Mr. Humphrey said. "I would say to him as a friend—cool it, stay with it, you'll get a fair hearing."

Several members of the Foreign Relations Committee appeared to be surprised by the reports of Mr. Kissinger's remarks in Salzburg, Austria, as they headed for what had been scheduled as a routine Foreign Relations Committee meeting to consider nominations of ambassadors.

Senator George D. Aiken of Vermont, the 81-year-old ranking Republican on the committee, read a news bulletin on Mr. Kissinger's remarks and said to a reporter, "The damned fool—can't he take it? Why,

that's part of the business, being criticized."

Mike Mansfield, Democrat of Montana, the Senate majority leader, disclosed to reporters that Mr. Kissinger had told him last Saturday and Sunday that he was seriously considering resigning and was considering not accompanying Mr. Nixon on the trip to the Middle East.

"I urged him not to resign," Mr. Mansfield said. "I said the country needed him."

The two top Democratic leaders in the House, Carl Albert of Oklahoma, who is the Speaker, and Thomas P. O'Neill Jr. of Massachusetts, the majority leader, also said that they hope Mr. Kissinger would not resign.

'Tragic's Step Feared'

"His resignation at this time could be tragic," said Representative Thomas E. Morgan, Democrat of Pennsylvania, who is chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Several members of the House Judiciary Committee, which is conducting the impeachment investigation of Mr. Nixon and has heard information regarding the wiretappings, deplored what they called leaks of information from the committee.

Representative Lawrence J. Hogan, Republican of Maryland, said that he "understood Kissinger's reaction" and added that it was "unconscionable the way some members are leaking material to the press."

"This committee leaks like a sieve," said Representative Delbert L. Latta, Republican of Ohio. "The country might lose one of the most effective Secretaries of State in my time because of the activities of certain members of Congress."

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did not yet know how or when the committee would proceed with its review. Several Senators said that they doubted that Mr. Kissinger would have to cut short his trip.

Mr. Fulbright and Senator Edmund S. Muskie, Democrat of Maine, who is chairman of a Foreign Relations subcommittee on surveillance, said that the Justice Department had up to now declined to provide the committee with documents on how the 17 wiretaps of Government officials and newsmen beginning in 1969 had been authorized.



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Senator George D. Aiken, Vermont Republican, reading of Secretary of State Kissinger's statement that he might resign, asked, "Can't he take it? Why, that's part of the business, being criticized."