

Haig Finds U. S. Global Role Enhanced in the Year

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Despite Watergate, "events of the past year have enhanced America's leadership role" in international affairs, according to Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., the White House chief of staff, who accompanied President Nixon on his trips to the Middle East, Western Europe and the Soviet Union last month.

General Haig voiced his opinion in a luncheon conversation last week in his White House office—shrimp salad on one tray, chef's salad on the other, iced tea on both. He is one of several major officials who have been made available for questioning to counteract the latest disclosures about the President and Watergate.

Talking about the present atmosphere in the capital, General Haig said with a smile, "Washington is the only place I know where hyperparanoia can be diagnosed as acute complacency."

While people are "really fed up with Watergate," General Haig said, "I do think most Americans believe President Nixon's international accomplishments are unparalleled in the past 25 years."

Asked whether Watergate had diminished the influence of the United States abroad, General Haig said "almost precisely the opposite" was true.

All that the Administration did to restore peace in the Middle East has "been proved to be sound," he said. "Our economic viability is unchallenged," he added, and all the people of Western Europe "look to the United States—its stability, its continuing in-

volvement and relevancy, and, above all, to its continuing leadership."

As for the Soviet Union, he said that the summit conference in Moscow "confirmed beyond question their [the Russians'] desire to continue détente."

The failure of President Nixon and the Soviet leader, Leonid I. Brezhnev, to reach an agreement on offensive nuclear weapons, General Haig said, was "due directly to their unwillingness to accept our minimum position."

The failure was due to "substantive differences," he added, and not to "atmospherics" at home—domestic political expediency, the President's presumed weakness and so on.

General Haig also discounted reports of a conflict on the

strategic arms negotiations between Secretary of State Kissinger and Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger. He disclosed that there had been a National Security Council meeting before the summit and said that there was "no fundamental disagreement" there. He did imply, however, that differing opinions had been expressed.

In the negotiations with the Soviet Union, General Haig continued; there developed "a degree of frankness" that "added immeasurably" to the prospect of putting "some kind of cap on nuclear arms development."

"That alone was worth the trip to Moscow," he said. "We did get a breakthrough in the sense that we agree to a new approach."

Apparently alluding to Sen-

ator Henry M. Jackson, Democrat of Washington, and other critics of détente with the Soviet Union, General Haig deplored a partisan approach to disarmament, which he said was important "to every citizen of this globe."

Reiterating his views on the success of the summit meetings in a talk with reporters in San Clemente today, General Haig said that the President had returned from them "intellectually and spiritually invigorated." They reinforced his determination to stay on the job, news agencies reported.

President Nixon believes that he will survive in office because "an impeachable case has not been made out against him by House investigators," United Press International quoted General Haig as saying.