

Kissinger Questioned on Wiretap Role

By BERNARD GWERTZMAN

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WASHINGTON, July 23 — The Senate Foreign Relations Committee questioned Secretary of State Kissinger for three hours today on documents suggesting that he might have misled the committee last year about his role in the wiretapping of 17 officials and newsmen from 1969 to 1971.

Afterward, Senator Jacob K. Javits, Republican of New York, said he had heard nothing in the closed-door hearings to lead him to reverse his support of Mr. Kissinger. He said Mr. Kissinger's "credibility remains unimpaired."

The committee chairman, J. W. Fulbright, Democrat of Arkansas, refused to make any judgments to newsmen on whether Mr. Kissinger's testimony removed all doubt. He said that the committee would have to decide this after the final witness, Gen. Alexander M. Haig Jr., formerly Mr. Kissinger's deputy and now the White House chief of staff, testifies next Tuesday.

Rusk Is Also Heard

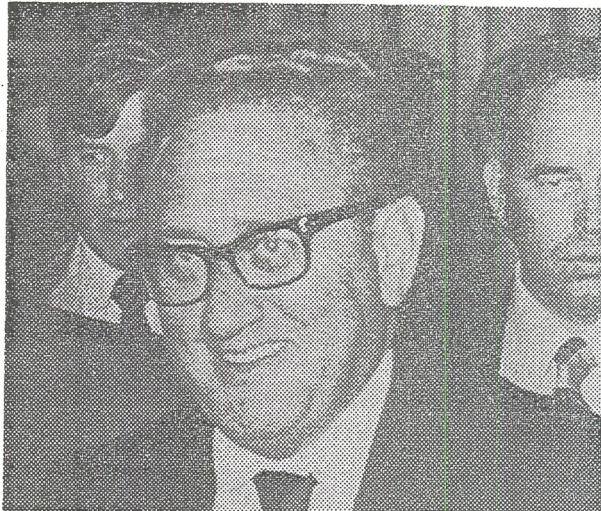
Former secretary of State Dean Rusk, who served during the entire eight years of the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations, testified this afternoon on the procedures used by the late J. Edgar Hoover in security cases.

The methods of the former Federal Bureau of Investigation director have become a crucial aspect of the investigation. Mr. Rusk and some previous F.B.I. and Justice Department witnesses have testified, according to Senate sources, that Mr. Hoover, to cover his own involvement, often said that a wiretap had been ordered by someone when in fact it had not been.

Mr. Kissinger, after his appearance, brushed past newsmen and made no comment.

But in off-the-cuff remarks to a few newsmen following him through the Capitol halls, he said the committee could now make up its mind if he had told the truth or not.

The hearings have been held



United Press International

Secretary of State Kissinger arriving for yesterday's closed hearing of Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

at Mr. Kissinger's request after news reports told of F.B.I. documents that suggested that Mr. Kissinger had not been completely candid with the committee last September when he was confirmed as Secretary of State.

The F.B.I. documents, including memos by Mr. Hoover, said that Mr. Kissinger and General Maig had initiated some of the taps in an effort to stem leaks of national security information to the press.

Staff Names Supplied

Mr. Kissinger, in testimony to the committee last September, and in several news conferences, has insisted that he did not "initiate" the program of wiretaps but supplied names of people of his National Security Council staff who either had access to information being leaked or whose names turned up in an investigation of someone else.

In addition, Mr. Kissinger has said that members of his staff who had adverse information in their security files were also put on the list of those wiretapped.

When a spate of articles appeared last month quoting the F.B.I. documents and casting

doubt on his credibility, Mr. Kissinger in an emotional news conference in Salzburg, Austria, on June 11, threatened to quit if his reputation was not cleared of perjury allegations.

His argument that he did not take the initiative in the taps was bolstered later by a letter from President Nixon to Mr. Fulbright taking complete responsibility for the wiretap program and asserting that Mr. Kissinger's previous testimony was "entirely correct."

The Senate Democratic leader, Mike Mansfield, of Montana, told newsmen before the start of today's hearings that "my confidence in him [Mr. Kissinger] is unshaken on the basis of all the evidence to date."

Senator George D. Aiken, Republican of Vermont, told newsmen that Mr. Kissinger has a "sympathetic audience" in the committee this morning.

"I didn't see any prosecuting attorneys," he added.