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Kissinger

'Cleared' of

Wiretap Lie

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The Senate Foreign Relations Committee said yesterday it has found nothing to indicate Secretary of State Henry Kissinger lied about his role in wiretapping newsmen and government officials.

Concluding an investigation asked by Kissinger, the committee affirmed its judgment made last September that his role in the wiretapping was no barrier to his holding office.

"Had we known last September what we know now, we still would have confirmed him," Senator J. William Fulbright (Dem-Ark.) told reporters.

"He did not in my opinion initiate the program," Fulbright said, adding he thinks the plan of stopping leaks of sensitive material came out of conferences between President Nixon and the late FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover.

In a written report issued later yesterday, the committee said:

"It should be noted that

Back Page Col. 1

KISSINGER REPORT

From Page 1

Dr. Kissinger's participation in the wiretapping came after assurances by the attorney general (John N. Mitchell) that such wiretaps were lawful and by Mr. Hoover that similar wiretaps were carried out under previous administrations.

"It is highly unlikely that anyone with Dr. Kissinger's background, largely within the academic world, would question assurances of legality and precedents from the nation's chief law-enforcement officers," the panel wrote.

During his confirmation hearings before the committee last September, Kissinger said his role in wiretapping had been limited to supplying names of National Security Council staff members with access to material of the type being leaked to reporters. At the time, Kis-

singer was Mr. Nixon's chief adviser on national security affairs.

Two months ago, FBI files indicating Kissinger had initiated the wiretaps were published, and Kissinger, with Mr. Nixon in Salzburg, Austria, called a news conference to say he would resign unless his name was cleared.

It was then that the committee reopened its investigation into whether Kissinger had initiated the project of wiretapping 13 government officials and four newsmen in 1969 and 1970.

State Department spokesman Robert Anderson said yesterday that "the secretary is gratified by the committee's report." Given the context of the report, Anderson continued, Kissinger "no longer sees any reason for resignation and therefore he does not intend to resign."

Associated Press