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# Senate Leaders Unite to Show Solid Front on Foreign Policy

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The Senate's Democratic and Republican leaders sought to assure allies and adversaries yesterday that basic American foreign policy will be unchanged, no matter who occupies the White House.

A desire to convince the world that no dangerous vacuum of Western leadership will result from the fall of President Nixon, or no sudden shift in U.S. policy, was behind a pledge of bipartisanship initiated by Sen. Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) and reciprocated by Sen. Hugh Scott (R-Pa.).

Mansfield launched the theme of rallying around Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger's statement at the White House Tuesday that, "When questions of peace and war are involved, no foreign government should have any doubts about the way in which our foreign policy will be conducted."

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Soviet Union might be tempted to intervene directly in the Arab-Israeli war in the belief that the United States was too distracted to respond.

A Kissinger appearance in a detente debate today inescapably would have focused attention on differences between the Pentagon and the State Department over negotiations with the Soviet Union on nuclear arms control. Kissinger publicly raised the question of civilian vs. military viewpoints at the conclusion of the American-Soviet summit talks in Moscow last month.

Kissinger reportedly intended to mute the Pentagon-State differences in his Senate testimony, and to concentrate instead on opposing concepts about detente policy. His testimony, nevertheless, would have accentuated differences with Jackson and other critics of administration policy who share the belief that the United States should take a firmer, more demanding, stand with the Soviet Union.

Mansfield, who supports the Nixon-Kissinger detente policy, along with most of the Senate's leadership, said yesterday that "we fully endorse" Kissinger's views

Kissinger, who is now in a position of primacy in the United States government, yesterday suddenly postponed a scheduled major appearance today on a profoundly disputed central theme of American foreign policy.

The secretary was scheduled to be the leadoff witness before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in the Senate Caucus Room in a national debate about American-Soviet detente policy.

Officially, the State Department explanation given for the quick shift in plans was that the secretary "is still working on his statement." The statement, which Kissinger regarded as possibly his most important declaration as secretary, has been in preparation for several weeks, occupying the top strategists in the State Department.

Sen. Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash., prime challenger of

the administration's detente policy with the Soviet Union, had been scheduled to deliver the main rebuttal to Kissinger Aug. 13. The new date for Kissinger's testimony has been left open, committee aides said yesterday. Launching such a debate at this acute moment for the United States' power structure inevitably would have intensified world speculation about the future course, of American foreign policy.

Kissinger is known to be preoccupied with the need to avoid tempting any adversary with any added display of American disunity or weakness during this period of domestic crisis. Last October, when there was considerably less domestic turmoil over the presidency, Kissinger and Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger took the lead in initiating an American global military alert. They feared that the

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that American foreign policy transcends party lines.

In a brief speech on the Senate floor the majority leader said that "despite our domestic difficulties, we will continue as Democrats to work with our Republican counterparts to make certain and to make known to all countries that our foreign policy will continue to be conducted on a bipartisan basis."

Mansfield specifically reiterated support for the administration's policy of relaxing tensions with China and the Soviet Union, and working for a Middle East peace settlement.

Scott, commending Mansfield's "tone of bipartisanship," said, "The system is working—it is working in the legislative [branch] and the courts—and we will resolve our differences and be better for it."

The fact that Vice President Gerald R. Ford has made it clear for months that Kissinger would be his Secretary of State has greatly diminished the uncertainties about the main lines of American foreign policy in a Ford administration.

Expectations that Kissinger will continue in office, however, by no means have eliminated all ques-

tions about variations in American foreign policy, either in this country or abroad.

Diplomats know that even while Ford has expressed the greatest admiration for Kissinger as "a superb Secretary of State" and "a genius" in diplomacy, the style of every President affects the conduct of foreign policy, no matter how much he may defer to the ability of his Secretary of State.

President Nixon and Kissinger operated together over such a long period, in parallel patterns of secret diplomacy, which fascinated them mutually, that Kissinger was given extraordinary flexibility in carrying out presidential goals.

For this reason, there is a widespread belief among diplomats that it will take time to mesh the Kissinger-Ford styles, no matter how closely their objectives may match.

This sorting-out process takes time in any government. It is this interval that American and other Western strategists have come to regard as an extremely hazardous period when an adversary may calculate that the United States is not fully geared-up enough to cope with an unexpected challenge.

Similarly, there is concern

in the Western alliance, now being expressed widely in the allied press, that any prolonged interval in resolving the control of the American government, which holds a nuclear umbrella over the allies, exposes the West as a whole to added hazard.

This equally heightened sensitivity among American strategists was evident yesterday in a sudden surge of concern at the Pentagon and the White House that a large-scale North Vietnamese offensive might be in the making in the Danang region of South Vietnam. Until this week, U.S. officials generally had expressed confidence that Communist forces were engaged in only limited military offensives in South Vietnam.