

# Ford Affirms His Support for the Meets With Secretary Indicates He Will Stay

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WASHINGTON, Aug. 8—Vice President Ford, on the eve of assuming the Presidency, said today that he believed the foreign policy conducted by Secretary of State Kissinger was "in the best interests of the United States."

In a statement issued after a 70-minute meeting with Mr. Kissinger this afternoon, Mr. Ford indicated that he would follow the basic course of the Nixon-Kissinger foreign policy, at least in the opening stages of his new administration. The wording of the statement also strongly suggested that he would retain Mr. Kissinger as Secretary of State.

"After the meeting, the Vice President noted that he has enjoyed working with Dr. Kissinger and has supported the foreign policy carried out by the Secretary," the brief statement said. "He said he believed that policy is in the best interests of the United States."

Mr. Kissinger, who first learned of Mr. Nixon's plans to resign during a session at the White House late last night, already has told key aides that he will remain in the Ford administration.

He has also asserted that in coming weeks the stress in public and private statements will be on the bipartisan and continuing nature of American foreign policy.

During their far-reaching conversation, Mr. Kissinger reportedly advised Mr. Ford of the need to reassure the Russians and Chinese of Washington's intention to continue the policy of seeking improved relations.

America's friends and allies will also be advised, aides said, that Mr. Ford intends to maintain American commitments, such as those in Europe and Indochina. The nations of the Middle East will also be told of the continuing interest of the new administration to seek a peace settlement in that area without jeopardizing Israel's security.

## Continuity Emphasized

Inevitably, however, some differences will arise between Mr. Ford's approach to foreign policy and Mr. Nixon's, State Department officials predicted. But right now the emphasis was on continuity.

Mr. Ford, who has long publicly praised Mr. Kissinger, symbolized the importance he was attaching to the Secretary's remaining in the Administration by telephoning him shortly after Mr. Nixon told him this morning of his impending resignation.

The State Department spokesman, Robert Anderson, said that during the 10-minute phone conversation, Mr. Ford invited Mr. Kissinger to a 3 P.M. meeting at his suite in the Executive Office Building, adjacent to the White House.

Photographers were invited to record the meeting, Mr. Ford's first with a prospective Cabinet officer in his administration since Mr. Nixon's intention to resign became known. State Department officials acknowledged that the session was as much symbolic as anything else.

## Underscores Importance

It was meant to underscore, aides said, the importance that Mr. Ford, who is not experienced in foreign affairs, would attach to the subject, and to show that the basic Nixon-Kissinger course would continue.

Mr. Kissinger had expressed serious concern privately in recent days about the possible danger to the United States if the impeachment crisis continued with the President's prestige undermined.

Yesterday, the Secretary went to the White House twice, the second time from 10 P.M. to shortly after midnight. During that second meeting, he conferred with Mr. Nixon in the President's living quarters.

he details of that meeting

have not been made known, but Mr. Kissinger was reported to have concurred with Mr. Nixon that the national interest would best be served by an end to the impeachment crisis—that is, by the President's resignation.

Mr. Nixon informed him then that he was going to quit, and Mr. Kissinger in the early morning ordered some of his key staff members to begin paper work necessary for a transition.

Messages will be sent to all Presidential appointees in the Foreign Service—ambassadors and high-level officials in Washington—informing them to submit resignations to the new President, a routine action when the Presidency changes.

Drafts were being prepared for Presidential declarations to various heads of government reaffirming American policy commitments. Discussion was begun on what Mr. Ford should say publicly on foreign policy in coming days.

## Some Key Issues

Among the key issues awaiting Mr. Ford's attention in the foreign policy field are the following:

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¶He will come into office while efforts are underway to keep up momentum toward a settlement in the Middle East. Mr. Ford's first official visitor will probably be King Hussein of Jordan, who is scheduled to arrive in Washington late next week.

Concern has been expressed in Israel and some Arab nations that failure to get further negotiations started could lead to an outbreak of new fighting. King Hussein is expected to press for American support of a Jordanian-Israeli accord on military disengagement.

¶Talks with the Russians are due to resume in Geneva next month on limitation of strategic arms, a key issue that has eluded a solution this year. Mr. Kissinger has spoken of disagreements within the administration of what the American negotiating stand should be, and Mr. Ford may have to make some difficult decisions in this area.

¶Relations with the Chinese have been a source of concern in Washington because of the internal problems in Peking as well as China's apparent worry that Mr. Nixon's resignation might lead to a different American attitude on better relations. Mr. Ford, who visited China while he was minority leader in the House, will probably have to assure China of the continuity of his policies.

¶The ties of the United States with its European allies have improved significantly in recent months, and the change in leadership, without a change in Mr. Kissinger's status, will probably not raise any new problems. But Mr. Ford will probably have to become acquainted with most of the key leaders, either by inviting them here or visiting them in Europe.

¶The Administration had embarked on a "new dialogue" with Latin America, but Mr. Nixon's refusal to ease the embargo on trade and relations with Cuba had caused some problems. Mr. Ford may formulate a more flexible policy toward Cuba, if encouraged to do so by Mr. Kissinger.

¶The situation in Indochina has not improved much, and cut the Administration's \$3-billion aid request for Indochina. Mr. Ford will be under some pressure to try to restore the amounts cut by Congress.

It is not known yet whether Mr. Ford will make any changes in the foreign policy machinery. For the first four years of the Nixon Administration, most influence was centered in the National Security Council staff headed by Mr. Kissinger, who was the President's adviser for national security.

But after becoming Secretary of State last September, Mr. Kissinger has gradually brought the main authority for making foreign policy.