

Kissinger Says Nixon Knew of Phone Taping

By Robert G. Kaiser and Warren Brown
Washington Post Staff Writers

Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger confirmed yesterday that with President Nixon's knowledge he had recorded telephone conversations with the former president, but said other aspects of a new book on Nixon's downfall were inaccurate.

An aide to Kissinger authorized to comment for him on the book, "The Final Days" by Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, said: "There are so many inaccuracies and significant untruths in this that he [Kissinger] is not going to comment on it."

David Eisenhower, the former President's son-in-law, denied yesterday that the Nixon family was ever worried that Nixon might kill himself. The book says aides and relatives, including David, worried that Nixon might take his own life.

Eisenhower said rumors that Nixon might kill himself were "logical," but added that "there was never any talk of suicide, never any fears expressed by the family, as far as I know."

"A lot of people in the White House (during Watergate) had a tendency to overdramatize," Eisenhower said.

Lawrence S. Eagleburger, deputy under secretary of state, was the Kissinger aide authorized to speak for him yesterday. Regarding the taping of Kissinger's conversations with Nixon, Eagleburger said:

"... It is true that the conversations were tran-

scribed. The President knew that there was someone on the line to take them down.

"The reason for this was that there would be follow-up needed as a result of phone conversations, and this was a way to assure that the follow-up was carried out. These same procedures applied to all of Kissinger's business arrangements. There was no special procedure for the President's calls.

"On the occasions when they and other conversations were taped, the tapes were destroyed as soon as the secretaries had a chance to transcribe them. The purpose of the system of taping was simply to handle the load for the secretaries."

Another Kissinger associate who worked with him at the National Security Council in the first Nixon administration, William G. Hyland, said yesterday he doubted the story that Kissinger recorded his phone conversations. Now the No. 2 man in the NSC staff, Hyland said: "I suspect that it's probably not true at all ... that it's a real canard."

Eagleburger also confirmed that Kissinger had Vice President Rockefeller's estate in New York "for a couple of months in 1973."

According to Woodward and Bernstein, Kissinger moved papers there out of concern over security in the White House. Later, according to the book, he was advised that it was illegal to store classified documents outside government facili-



Associated Press

President Nixon and Secretary Kissinger outside the White House in October, 1973.

ties, and Kissinger moved them back to Washington.

Eagleburger himself appears in an excerpt from the book describing a meeting between President Nixon and Kissinger the day before Nixon announced his resignation. The book says Nixon sobbed and struck his fists on the carpet of the Lincoln Sitting Room during the meeting.

It also says Eagleburger was listening on an extension phone right after that meeting when Nixon called Kissinger and said in part: "Henry, please don't ever tell anyone that I cried and that I was not strong."

This section was read to Eagleburger by a reporter yesterday. He listened and then said he would have no comment.

Several former associates of Kissinger said in interviews yesterday that the transcribing of telephone calls was routine in his of-

rice. All of them asked not to be identified by name.

Several of these persons said they thought it was routine for senior government officials to ask their secretaries to listen in on phone calls and make notes for the record.

One former Kissinger associate said tape recording equipment was installed in early 1972 to record calls. The plan to start using the equipment then was cleared through White House chief of staff H. R. (Bob) Halde- man in a memorandum which this associate remembered seeing at the time, he said.

The book says tape recordings of phone calls began in 1970, but this associate said he thought it was later.

Another former Kissinger associate said he had listened in on some of the telephone conversations between Kissinger and Nixon. "It was frightening," this man said. "Some of the

younger Kissinger aides couldn't take it... I think Nixon was one of the most unbalanced personalities that has ever been in the presidency."

David Eisenhower was asked yesterday about references in the book to heavy drinking by President Nixon. "I didn't see a lot of it, particularly," he said.

Asked about the book's description of the relationship between Mr. and Mrs. Nixon as strained, Eisenhower said that was "a general characterization of the relationship."

Kissinger Lecture

Agence France-Presse

STOCKHOLM, March 26—

U.S. Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger is scheduled to give a lecture at the Swedish Foreign Affairs Institute in May, it was announced here today.