TEASE

HOWARD K. SMITH:

Good evening. I'm Howard K. Smith.

Henry Kissinger is a true phenomenon. Transformed from an immigrant who had trouble with the language to a little known professor ... into a national resource like Alaskan oil.

From a writer of turgid academic prose into a genuine star that tourists gather to get a glimpse of as they would Elizabeth Taylor. He's been named the most admired American ... has won the Nobel Peace Prize ... a constitutional amendment has been offered that would let him run for President ... it won't pass but what a tribute.

He is undoubtedly not as good as his legend ... but the approximation is often startling.

Our diplomatic correspondent Ted Koppel has spent months with Kissinger.

In addition there have been seven regular interviews.

We hope thereby in the next hour to provide a closer portrait of Henry Kissinger than the public has yet seen.

TED KOPPEL:

Anwar Sadat?
HENRY KISSINGER:  
President of Egypt and one of the most moderate leaders in the Middle East.

ANWAR SADAT:  
I like him as a man ... before everything ... and then after that as a statesman ... As a statesman I admire him ... really ... really.

TED KOPPEL:  
Simcha Dinitz?

HENRY KISSINGER:  
Israeli Ambassador to the United States with whom I have worked very closely in many crises.

SIMCHA DINITZ:  
When I accompanied him ... Doctor Kissinger ... to a meeting with Mrs. Meir ... And on the last visit there was some sort of a discussion between them ... She says, "What do you want from me? I was still born in the last century ..."  

Dr. Kissinger looked at her and he said, "Nineteenth century is my specialty."

TED KOPPEL:  
Mort Halperin?
HENRY KISSINGER:
An associate of mine at Harvard University whom I brought to the White House when I first worked there ... who resigned after six months over some jurisdictional dispute.

MORT HALPERIN:
I don't think there's any reason to believe that his morality is significantly different than his colleagues in the administration.

TED KOPPEL:
Al Haig?

HENRY KISSINGER:

ALEXANDER HAIG:
Henry is definitely a unique national asset.

TED KOPPEL:
Walter Kissinger?

HENRY KISSINGER:
My brother.

TED KOPPEL:
Was there anything outstanding about Henry in those days?
WALTER KISSINGER:
Nothing that really strikes me.

HENRY KISSINGER: (SOF)
I, Henry Kissinger do solemnly swear that I will support ...
CHUCK ABEL:
Author, statesman, architect and engineer of our country's foreign policy, recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize ... The only thing he hasn't done so far, and I understand he's working on this, is to reduce the size of the lines at our gasoline stations.

HENRY KISSINGER:
Well, I have a hard time getting used to the proposition that I've become a, that I've become a sort of, this sort of public attention ...

TED KOPPEL:
Well, you're a cult hero today ...

HENRY KISSINGER:
Yeah, that's quite new to me, and quite unexpected.

TED KOPPEL:
Unexpected perhaps, but not totally unplanned.

Henry Kissinger's meteoric rise to prominence has been the calculated product of a man who not only recognizes opportunity but has carefully prepared for it.

Fifty-one years ago, when he was born to Louis and Paula Kissinger in the Bavarian town of Fuerth, there was no reason to believe that Heinz Alfred Kissinger would reach maturity anywhere but Germany.
TED KOPPEL: (CONT)

The Jewish population was more thoroughly assimilated in Germany than anywhere else in Europe and Kissinger's father was a respected and well established teacher.

But the whole atmosphere would undergo violent change.

With the rise of National Socialism, Kissinger would learn about the vulnerability and impermanence of people and institutions. He would absorb and retain that lesson.

HENRY KISSINGER:

Well of course I was nine when the Nazis came to power.

I think the deepest impact it made on me was that twice, once in 1933 when the Nazis came to power, then in 1938 when I came to the United States, all the things that had seemed secure and stable collapsed and many of the people that one had considered the steady examples suddenly were thrown into enormous turmoil themselves and into fantastic insecurities. So in this sense it was a rather unsettling experience.

WALTER KISSINGER:

The idea of going to the United States, going to America, had great romance attached to it.

HENRY KISSINGER:

It was extremely exhilarating to be able to walk along the street without having to worry whether some kids would beat you up and without any sense of discrimination.
HENRY KISSINGER: (CONT)

On the other hand, having been within my circle, President in my class and unbelievable as it may seem now, Captain of the soccer team, not to speak the language and not to be part of the group was quite a transition, and uh, I was rather self-conscious of my accent at the time but not because anybody made fun of it.

TED KOPPEL:
Well, one thing that almost anyone would notice as a difference between the two of you is that you speak English without a trace of an accent and Henry has this rather heavy Germanic accent. Why is that?

WALTER KISSINGER:
Well, someone has suggested, facetiously, that I listen better.

TED KOPPEL:
Still, even at the age of twenty, Kissinger demonstrated a precocious ability for recognizing the right mentors.

It was 1943. He'd been drafted, became an American citizen and was serving in the infantry when he met another exile from Germany, Fritz Kraemer.

Kraemer was fifteen years older than Kissinger ...

had two Ph.D.'s and was working for U.S. Army Intelligence delivering morale boosting lectures.
HENRY KISSINGER:

I wrote him a letter how much impressed I was by his lectures ...

so he came out into the maneuver area where I was and he talked to me and he said to me ...

You have an unusual political mind ...

which really was startling news to me.

It hadn't occurred to me, and he said you ought to drop accounting and concentrate on history and politics and then eventually he had me transferred into Intelligence.

TED KOPPEL:

It was while he was working in Counter-Intelligence that Kissinger won the Bronze Star.

In 1945 there was an urgent need to restore civil order throughout Germany and Henry Kissinger would demonstrate a rare ability that he would refine over the years to put aside personal feelings in favor of pragmatic results.

HENRY KISSINGER:

... One of my jobs was to find Gestapo agents. And at the end of the war I was organizing a police force in a German town and a man came into my office, and I asked him, what is your experience? And he said, Staatspolizei, which was one part of the phrase of which Gestapo was composed. So as a joke I said Geheime Staatspolizei, which was the other part and he said yes, so I locked him up.
HENRY KISSINGER: (CONT)

So he asked me what he could do to show his good will to me and I said, find your colleagues. So he, and I rounded up over fifty Gestapo agents, and he and I ... he actually deserves more credit than I, had locked up more Gestapo agents than the whole rest of the American army put together ...

TED KOPPEL:
And that's your ... (OVERLAP)

HENRY KISSINGER:
And I'm afraid, that's what I got my Bronze Star for.

In 1947, when I left the army, I then applied to Harvard.

I applied to a lot of schools. I had no special desire for Harvard. But I knew so little about college applications that I sent out these, my applications in May of the year when I wanted to be admitted and I received an extraordinary number of snotty replies that told me that I wasn't eligible ...

And Harvard, I hate to admit it, was the only place that took me.

TED KOPPEL:
It was the beginning of an association that would last for more than twenty years.

In 1949 while Kissinger was still an undergraduate, he married Ann Fleischer.

The same year he was working on his senior honors thesis.

(MORE)
And even then Henry Kissinger does not appear to have been afflicted by any false modesty.

The thesis was entitled "The Meaning Of History: Reflections on Spengler, Toynbee and Kant."

Friends tell of Kissinger being so preoccupied by his studies that he sometimes barely talked to his wife. Still, the marriage survived fifteen years and produced two children ... a daughter Elizabeth ... and a son, David.

In 1950, Kissinger graduated summa cum laude, was elected to Phi Beta Kappa and moved immediately on to graduate school.

Together with a new mentor, his advisor Professor William Elliot, Kissinger created the Harvard International Seminar.

The seminar brought people between the ages of twenty-five and forty, from all over the world to Harvard for eight weeks during the summer.

Kissinger selected applicants from the mid-level ranks of government, politics, economics and journalism.

The seminar graduates would, over the years, form an expanding network of contacts for Henry Kissinger. A network that would grow in number and influence.

Are there any of these people today who are in positions ...?

HENRY KISSINGER:
Many are in key positions ...

(MORE)
HENRY KISSINGER: (CONT)

The Prime Minister of Turkey ...

The Foreign Minister of Norway ...

The Deputy Prime Minister of Israel ...

The Minister of Trade and Industry of Japan ...

They're key people all over the world, but that was not the intention. I mean, the fact that they are key people means that we selected them well. It was not a plan to have friends in key positions on the day that I would become Secretary of State.

MORT HALPERIN:

He was as difficult to work with then as he, as he is now.

TED KOPPEL:

In those days, Mort Halperin was an associate of Kissinger's at Harvard, and years later would go to work for him in Washington.

MORT HALPERIN:

I think a certain paranoia was in evidence then as, as now ...

Just to give one example, when he initially took a leave of absence to come down to Washington to take the job as Assistant to the President for National Security, another member of the faculty wanted to give this defense policy course that he and I had given together. He saw this as a plot to take the course away from him and insisted as long as he was on a leave of absence nobody could give the course. And so for two years the course wasn't taught.
TED KOPPEL:
Harvard, after all was relatively secure and Kissinger had learned about the tenuous nature of politics during the years he spent working as foreign policy advisor to Nelson Rockefeller.

HENRY KISSINGER:
When I first met him, I have to say candidly I thought he was the all American Boy Scout and I avoided him as much as I could . . . But then I realized that behind this buoyant exterior there was a man of really artistic sensitivity, enormous courage, and I worked with him in three losing presidential ... pre-presidential campaigns.

TED KOPPEL:
Kissinger was still working for Governor Rockefeller when the call came from Richard Nixon.

Would he join the new administration?

NELSON ROCKEFELLER:
All right, he had worked for President Kennedy ...

He had worked for President Johnson ... special assignments.

He came and said the President asked him to do this and I said ... look, you've got to do this.

He wasn't, you know, this, just as you say was a shift ...

(MORE)
NELSON ROCKEFELLER: (CONT)

I said, Henry you've got to do this.

You have a capacity and knowledge that this country needs. The President needs it, and absolutely you've got to do it, and in every way I'll support you.

TED KOPPEL:

Within the Rockefeller camp, Richard Nixon had been perceived as something less than a folk hero ... 

But ultimately for Kissinger it boiled down to a choice between emotion and pragmatism.

HENRY KISSINGER:

At first it was a very difficult decision for me to make ... and then I reflected that the President was taking a much bigger chance than me ... asking me to be his Assistant for National Security Affairs, than I was on him.

TED KOPPEL:

Until now, Kissinger had worked only in the shadow of power and he was visibly unnerved by the glare of publicity.
"Dr. Henry Kissinger has agreed to come with the White House staff as assistant to the President-elect for National Security affairs ...

"The President-elect has urged me particularly to bring in new procedures and the best talent in the country, whether or not it agrees with his views."

Henry Kissinger would never be quite that nervous in public again.
PART TWO

TED KOPPEL:

Henry Kissinger had worked for John Kennedy ...

Lyndon Johnson ...

and Nelson Rockefeller.

But now he was on the Nixon team and apparently determined to prove himself a team player.

H. R. HALDEMAN:

Henry often said to us, having worked in other White Houses, which most of us had not, that he had never seen a White House staff operation in which there was so little infighting, or backbiting or internal problems ...

that they were disagreements of minor nature related to the overall objectives ...

there was rarely disagreement, if ever, as to the objective.

Within the White House we did not work on an adversary relationship where one would fight the other for what he thought was right ...

We'd work together to seek common ground and, uh, invariably did.
TED KOPPEL:
The new administration was less than five months old when it was confronted by its first internal crisis.
The secret bombing of Cambodia had been leaked to the press and the first modest headlines would grow.

"Can you call in American planes ... any day? Any time you need them?"

OUTCUE:

SOLDIER:
"Anytime I need them."

TED KOPPEL:
As the most visible outsider on the Nixon team, Kissinger himself was not above suspicion.

TOM BRADEN:
Well, he gets called into the office, and here's this fellow sitting here who's wild ... ready to go up the wall. He's pounding on the desk and using language which I can't repeat on the air ...

And uh, he's complaining that there are leaks in the New York Times and elsewhere ... but particularly in the New York Times.

(MORE)
TOM BRADEN: (CONT)
It was over the Cambodia story ..., bombing story.

Henry listens to this vituperative outrage, outrageous language and the demands and he says what do you want me to do?

And the man behind the desk says I want you to bug these people -- I want you to bug this staff ... It's probably coming from your staff.

MORT HALPERIN:
I told him I did not leak -- had not leaked the story ... He said that he believed me, but that others were suspicious, and asked me if I would agree, for a period of some months, not to have any access to the most sensitive material -- the kind that only a small number of people saw, so that when leaks occurred, we both were confident that they would -- because they always do -- he would be able to say -- it can't be Halperin ... He doesn't even know that ... And then, after awhile people would settle down, and recognize that leaks are a way of life, and that he could go back to giving me this access to this information. And I agreed, which, of course, made the tap on my phone absolutely absurd, because-a, not only is it clear to me that nobody who leaks sensitive information does it on the telephone, but in my case, I wasn't even given any of the information.

TED KOPPEL:
A few months later, still unaware of the surveillance, Mort Halperin resigned. The tap remained on his phone for an additional year ... and now Halperin is suing Henry Kissinger and others.
TED KOPPEL: (CONT)

It was an issue, this business of who had ordered the wiretaps and why that would come back to haunt Henry Kissinger during and after his confirmation hearings when he was nominated to become Secretary of State.

But the question of whether the President or Kissinger initiated the wiretaps has never been totally resolved in public.

HENRY KISSINGER

The impression has been created that I was involved in some illegal or shady activity that I am trying to obscure with misleading testimony.

TED KOPPEL

The wire taping issue had been festering for five years. For whatever his reasons, suddenly this week, on the eve of what should have been a triumphal victory lap around the Middle East with the President...

Kissinger himself brought it to a head.

HENRY KISSINGER

I do not believe it is possible to conduct the foreign policy of the United States under these circumstances when the character and credibility of the Secretary of State is at issue. And if it is not cleared up, I will resign.

TED KOPPEL

In the aftermath of Kissinger's emotional news conference, it is hard to remember how undramatically the original story slipped in and out of the public consciousness.
TED KOPPEL

Still, during the first term of the Nixon administration there were only a few voices in the wilderness crying about government surveillance ... and we in the media, and the public at large were preoccupied with the war ... the dead ... and peace with honor.

We caught only peripheral glances of Henry Kissinger at work.

He would appear in Saigon ...

and disappear in Pakistan.

And it was later that we learned where he'd gone and whom he'd seen.

We got vicarious thrills watching this metamorphosis of Henry Kissinger ...

Not that we were ever quite sure what he was doing ...

but when it was done the results seemed all the more remarkable.

Nothing he did would ever totally surprise us now ...

(MORE)
TED KOPPEL: (CONT)
And it seemed somehow curiously appropriate that he would also be a "secret swinger."

HENRY KISSINGER:
"An example of what I have been doing is a remark by Gloria Steinem ...
'... and never has been a girlfriend of Henry Kissinger.'"

TED KOPPEL:
By the fall of 1972 we were half convinced that nothing was beyond the capacity of this remarkable man ...
For weeks we had watched Kissinger and Le Duc Tho in Paris, analyzing their secret huddles through long lenses ... carefully weighing their public expressions ...
until finally Kissinger brought us the inevitable news that it was all over.

HENRY KISSINGER:
"We believe that ... peace is at hand."

TED KOPPEL:
Perhaps it was the pressure of the '72 elections that forced Kissinger into that miscalculation ...
but his judgment had been premature.

HENRY KISSINGER:
Some failures are inevitable ...
HENRY KISSINGER: (CONT)

Because when you conduct the foreign policy of a major country you're up against people of equal ability in a lot of places and there are many events that are outside of your control and in addition you're bound to make a mistake ... sometime.

Now I would like to think that what keeps me going is not the consciousness of success but the sense of history and the sense that after I've left, people will look at some permanent achievement.

--- INCUE:---

HENRY KISSINGER:

"And that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office I'm about to enter ... so help me God." (APPLAUSE)

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TED KOPPEL:

For some time now Kissinger had been regarded as de facto Secretary of State ...

Now it was official and he could begin the task, as he put it, of institutionalizing American foreign policy.

HENRY KISSINGER:

Basically in any organization that I've joined ...

there is a fairly substantial turnover at the beginning until I get the core group that has the same degree of interest in the job that I do ...

(MORE)
HENRY KISSINGER: (CONT)
And I think you must have found on the trips that the people who work most closely with me enjoy working these hours.

I don't mean to embarrass you ...?

LAWRENCE S. EAGLEBURGER:
No.

TED KOPPEL:
But some years ago you were working for him at the NSC and you worked yourself to such a point of exhaustion that you had to leave ... Why did you come back?

LAWRENCE EAGLEBURGER:
Because I think he's doing the country a great service and anything I can do to help I want to try to do ... it's as simple as that.

TED KOPPEL:
Would they dare tell us if they didn't enjoy it?

HENRY KISSINGER:
No, they'd quit ...

Why would anyone work fifteen hours unless he believed in it.

It's not what they tell you, that's irrelevant ...

(MORE)
HENRY KISSINGER: (CONT)

It is the atmosphere among those who work on these projects and I have the sense that the group that has been closest to me ...

and that Sisco ... if anything Sisco drives me, I don't drive him.

JOSEPH J. SISCO:

(LAUGH) Well, we have a private joke ...

after we've put in fourteen or sixteen hours, uh, the private joke is we've gotten a good day's work out of him ...

but I think he does reasonably well with us.

WINSTON LORD:

He'll ask someone for a paper and they'll come in with the paper and he'll call the man back in and say is this the best you can do on this paper? And the man will say well, uh, I'll try and do better. I'll go back and try it again ...

The man goes back ... comes back a couple of days later with a new draft ... and he says is this the best you can do? The man says well, I thought so ... but I'll try again ... He goes back again.

This happens five or six times and finally the guy, exhausted, comes in ... the staff member ... and he gives the guy the paper and Kissinger looks at it and calls the guy back in the next day and says, now really, is this the really best you can do ... and the man finally, exhausted says yes, damn it ... I've done everything I can.

(MORE)
WINSTON LORD: (CONT)
This is the best I can do ... at which point Kissinger says, well in that case now I'll read it.

WALTER KISSINGER:
I think perhaps the quality that has surprised me the most is the leadership ability.
The ability to organize and move people with him in a kind of an inspirational way.

I had not seen that dimension in Henry before.

TED KOPPEL:
On March 30, 1974 in a quiet and very private ceremony, Henry Kissinger married Nancy Maginnes ... and the couple flew almost immediately on their honeymoon to Acapulco, Mexico.

Mrs. Kissinger now occupies the same job her husband once held as foreign policy advisor to Nelson Rockefeller.

HENRY KISSINGER:
She's very steady and very warm and so I ...
TED KOPPEL:

They have more in common, these two men, than one might first believe. They share a sense that history is the ultimate judge of morality. That foreign policy is a pragmatic business in which a careful balance among the great powers overshadows all other considerations. Their relationship is governed not by any discernible warmth or friendship but by a mutuality of interest. The President embattled by Watergate ... and the mounting threat of impeachment ... needs Kissinger. There is no one else in Washington to implement America's foreign policy. And as long as Richard Nixon occupies the White House, Henry Kissinger serves at his pleasure. And so the impression of an active, working partnership unaffected by domestic pressures is maintained.

To what extent does he advise you or order you? To what extent do you advise him?

HENRY KISSINGER:

It almost never reaches the point where he says I order you to do this. He'll ask my opinion ... and I'll give it to him. But finally he makes the decision of what needs to be done.

TED KOPPEL:

Without a natural power base of his own, Kissinger uses the available resources at hand.
NEWSMEN:
Mr. Secretary, Mr. Secretary ...

JOSEPH KRAFT:
It seems to me that one of the important innovations that Henry Kissinger has made in government and practiced in Washington is that he has understood that he had a kind of rapport, kind of a sympathetic harmony with the media in general, the press and the television people. And that he exploited that and to a large extent he has cultivated the media and the radio and the television people. We to a very, very large extent are his constituency.

HENRY KISSINGER:
If you mislead the press consciously once, and you're caught at it, your credibility is destroyed forever. I don't consciously mislead it. And I try not to manipulate it. Because it's a long term relationship that I have to be interested in and because especially again in this time the confidence of the public in their leaders is more important than whether they agree with any one particular policy.

TED KOPPEL:
If Kissinger's success with the media is impressive, his courtship of Congressional leaders is breathtaking.
HENRY KISSINGER:
Who told me the other day that Mr. Chairman that when your margin goes below eighty percent in Pennsylvania you start panicking. (LAUGHTER) I basically believe that foreign policy of the United States has to be bipartisan. There can't be a policy that is right for Democrats and another for Republicans. When you make foreign policy you deal with the nations and not with a particular party.

TED KOPPEL:
Without allowing anyone to call his loyalty to the President into question, Henry Kissinger has become a bipartisan Secretary of State. The same Congress that is preparing to impeach the President, is, with few exceptions, seduced by his attention and flattered to be invited aboard his plane and to be seen in his company. Having created the most conducive atmosphere possible Henry Kissinger is ready to go to work.

The issues before him are staggering. SALT, the continuing effort to limit by treaty the expansion of Soviet and American offensive nuclear weapons. The Middle East, like Vietnam, an area in which regional hostilities must be defused before they explode into great power confrontations. China, Japan, Western Europe. Committed in varying degrees to a new relationship with Washington. But each, with lingering suspicions about American intentions. The Moscow summit. A hamstrung President preparing to meet his strongest adversary.

(MORE)
TED KOPPEL: (CONT)
Each issue appears and reappears during the course of the Secretary's working day. It is 7:45. Driving with him is his deputy on the National Security Council, Major General Brent Skowcroft. There have been rumors of a rift between Kissinger and Defense Secretary Schlesinger. Although the Secretary of State is the senior Cabinet member, Kissinger makes the gesture of going to Schlesinger's office at the Pentagon.

HENRY KISSINGER:
I generally meet with Secretary Schlesinger for breakfast at least once every two weeks. And we review business between the State Department and the Defense Department. Also in my capacity as assistant to the President for National Security Council business, uh today a fair amount of the discussion concerns SALT, but not all of it by any means. He just came back from a trip to Europe and told me about his impressions.

JAMES SCHLESINGER: (SOF)
200 Panzer regiment in a damned snowstorm.

TED KOPPEL:
After more than 2 hours at the Pentagon, Kissinger stops as he does daily at his White House office. Unlike previous Secretaries of State, Kissinger also holds the job of Chairman of the National Security Council. (MORE)
TED KOPPEL: (CONT)
It serves a multiple purpose. It eliminates the possibility of another man holding the job and standing between Kissinger and the President. It gives Kissinger a limited degree of immunity from Congressional scrutiny and continuing chairmanship of most of the administration's intelligence gathering committees.

One such group meeting in the White House situation room is the Verification Panel.

HENRY KISSINGER:
That deals with disarmament and arms controls issues.

... That meeting came about because of the Soviet proposal that was handed to me on my last trip to Moscow. And which has now been the subject of interagency analysis and has been reduced to a number of options with which we can respond.

TED KOPPEL:
Washington's negotiating position with Moscow must first be reconciled within the bureaucracy. That was the purpose of the White House meeting. But now as Kissinger prepares to meet with Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko on his way to the Middle East, he must refine America's position on strategic arms limitation within his own staff.

HENRY KISSINGER:
Now what?
TED KOPPEL:
Kissinger's press officers are about to confront reporters of the State Department's daily news briefing. The night before Senator Henry Jackson has charged that American foreign policy is being tailored to distract from the administration's domestic problems.

ROBERT MCCLOSKEY:
One of them is a speech by Senator Jackson? Which we're certain to be asked about?

HENRY KISSINGER:
Just call attention to our basic position which is we make agreements in the national interest. We don't make them on the basis of political considerations. And that ah, we think it's an unworthy comment.

ROBERT MCCLOSKEY:
Anything fall into place on the meeting with Gromyko?

HENRY KISSINGER:
I'll know that later today. It's practically certain.

AIDE:
You're seeing Ambassador Dobrynin?

HENRY KISSINGER:
At one. And it will be definitely fixed then. You can say it's practically certain.
TED KOPPEL:
About once a week, Kissinger and Soviet Ambassador Dobrynin meet for lunch to discuss pending issues. The principal matters before them now: strategic arms limitation talks and President Nixon's upcoming visit to Moscow. Both subjects will receive further attention when Kissinger meets Gromyko in Geneva.

HENRY KISSINGER:
We reviewed the entire agenda and spent some time on SALT.

... well at any rate we meet at my place on Sunday ... and at his place ... I mean at my place Monday ... That means I have to supply the food and I won't get any caviar.

AMBASSADOR DOBRYNIN:
Well, if you like I could provide you with one (LAUGH)... just on a lend lease basis.

HENRY KISSINGER:
I gave him enough of an indication of which parts of the Soviet proposal nobody in the bureaucracy had any use for. I couldn't tell him yet what we would finally come down on. But I at least told him which part of it we could not consider further. Then at 3 o'clock ... the meeting with my assistant secretaries. That is a daily meeting I have in which the heads of the various bureaus report on some major activities in their areas.
"Mr. Secretary the elections in Colombia were significant ... in 16 years."

TED KOPPEL:
It is in precisely this area that Kissinger's stewardship of the State Department comes in for criticism. He is accused of being frequently inaccessible to all but his closest inner circle ... and of spending so much time abroad that he's unable to devote attention to the less dramatic but important bureaucratic chores.

HENRY KISSINGER:
I give you a great scoop and you blow it.

TED KOPPEL:
No one has accused the secretary of being inaccessible to the media.

HENRY KISSINGER:
Now, that message I got about what you want to do. I think you got that Reston article totally wrong. First of all it's totally untrue that Bruce has requested to return. And I have a long cable from him in which he denies it ... is outraged by the story ... and claims that he's very happy in Peking.

TED KOPPEL:
This telephone conversation with the reporter is for his professional use.
TED KOPPEL: (CONT)

But on the condition that readers of the eventual story will find no attribution ... no references to Kissinger or to even senior American officials.

HENRY KISSINGER:

The fact of the matter is that our China policy is absolutely on course now. What it means is that it's exactly on the course that it was outlined last November ... that exchange programs will be starting again very soon. And that all the signals are positive. Look ... the Chinese never looked at the policy with us on sentimental grounds. They looked on it on practical grounds. And they never did it for uh understanding in the abstract.

What I have to get straight here ... do you have a breakdown of what the total sums are that were submitting today? Could I go over that first?

Tomorrow morning I have to testify before a bipartisan leadership meeting at the White House ... about the foreign aid message that the President is sending up to Congress tomorrow.

TED KOPPEL:

Unlike some of his predecessors, Kissinger does his homework and does it thoroughly. He will know in which areas to expect Congressional criticisms or reservations ... and how to overcome them.
HENRY KISSINGER:
Special requirement means we have the right to do anything?

AIDE:
Yes but we're expected to do prior consultation. Now, I've just finished talking with Dan Inouye about that and uh he thinks we might have some trouble on that. Unless you would be willing to give some examples of what you could have done ... just how important this flexibility is.

HENRY KISSINGER:
Would that be available in countries for which we don't have categories? Supposing we wanted to do ... so we could use it ... we could use part of this in Syria?

AIDE:
Yes, that's correct.

TED KOPPEL: (V/O)
A new shift of secretaries has come on duty.

It's now twenty to nine. Are you almost through?

HENRY KISSINGER:
I have to see the Israeli ambassador. And I have to go over this mess on my desk.
TED KOPPEL:
What time do you think you'll be finished?

HENRY KISSINGER:
About a quarter to ten ... ten.

TED KOPPEL:
Somehow Kissinger manages to keep up with almost everything that is written or said about him in the media. It is almost the end of a 15 hour day. But some late reading is still done during the drive back home. This has not been an unusual day for the Secretary of State. But then no one, not even his harshest critic has ever questioned the degree of application that Henry Kissinger brings to his work.

It is late April and Henry Kissinger is beginning what will become his longest stay out of the country since his appointment as Secretary of State.

Communications equipment aboard his plane assures that Kissinger will never be out of touch with the White House.

ALEXANDER HAIG:
Sometimes as many as two to a half a dozen communications each day. And I can assure you that there was hardly a moment that the President wasn't aware of the precise state of play. And had not had an opportunity to, where necessary, to provide Dr. Kissinger with his instructions and counsel.
HENRY KISSINGER:
Special requirement means we have the right to do anything?

AIDE:
Yes but we're expected to do prior consultation. Now, I've just finished talking with Dan Inouye about that and uh he thinks we might have some trouble on that. Unless you would be willing to give some examples of what you could have done ... just how important this flexibility is.

HENRY KISSINGER:
Would that be available in countries for which we don't have categories? Supposing we wanted to do ... so we could use it ... we could use part of this in Syria?

AIDE:
Yes, that's correct.

TED KOPPEL: (V/O)
A new shift of secretaries has come on duty.

It's now twenty to nine. Are you almost through?

HENRY KISSINGER:
I have to see the Israeli ambassador. And I have to go over this mess on my desk.
TED KOPPEL:
Whatever the President's instructions or counsel, Kissinger remains the single most important instrument of American foreign policy. And during these trips it is Kissinger who is stage center ... the focus of all attention ... the object of all expectations. It presents a problem that's raised, among others, by columnist Joe Kraft.

JOSEPH KRAFT:
Henry Kissinger is a one man show. He's the only Toscanini in town. He does, he does everything. Look at his staff. His staff is always a close knit little group of people for whom he has absolute trust. Who cannot threaten him in any way.

TED KOPPEL:
Damascus, Syria.

HENRY KISSINGER:
The Middle East has a tendency to personalize issues. And therefore, in the Middle East, there has been a great tendency to throw me into the fray. At some point we have to turn it into more regular channels. On the other hand, I don't know if we could have moved quite so fast if it hadn't been for the personal participation.

TED KOPPEL:
That personal participation has made Kissinger the object of what sometimes borders on international reverence.
ANWAR SADAT:
After two hours, I found I can trust this man. We were lonely ... both of us. And since that time uh ... we work together.

TED KOPPEL:
Because of the frantic atmosphere generated by Kissinger's shuttle diplomacy, it is almost inevitable that we tend to focus on his daily movements. But by so doing we sometimes lose sight of his overall objectives. It is the Middle East which is at stake here ... not the Golan Heights. It is war between the Soviet Union and the United States Kissinger is trying to avoid ... not some series of artillery duels between the Syrians and the Israelis. And it is a quest for a balance of power and Arab oil that motivates America's new policy of even-handedness ... not some compelling impulse for fair play. It is a policy that demands the subordination of individual tragedy to the greater good.

HENRY KISSINGER:
I can't forget that it is my peculiar role in this negotiation to be the one party who is not ... who does not have a personal stake in it and therefore if I'm going to make a contribution it must be in terms of the interests that unites these two sides. And I therefore make a conscious effort to stay out of the day-to-day tactics where I possibly can, and to concentrate on the essentials which can bridge the differences.
TED KOPPEL:
Three times on this trip, Kissinger nearly gave up -- but it's a mark of the man's negotiating style that he had prepared for the possibility of failure.

HENRY KISSINGER:
There are two basic objectives on this trip. One, if possible to achieve an agreement. If an agreement fails ... I have spent a great deal of time visiting the capitals of other Arab countries so that they understood every step of the negotiations ... and so that they realize the difficulties that arose were due to the objective nature of the problem ... rather than to this or that failure uh on the part of the United States.

TED KOPPEL:
Russian sensitivities had to be taken into consideration also. If the balance of power in the Middle East threatened to shift too radically, the Soviet Union might try to sabotage the effort. And Moscow's intentions were far from clear. Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko was said to be on his way to Damascus.

NEWSMAN:
Is Gromyko going to Damascus?

HENRY KISSINGER:
Is Gromyko going to meet me in Damascus?
NEWSMAN:
Yeah.

HENRY KISSINGER:
There's no meeting planned. I do not expect to meet him in Damascus.

TED KOPPEL:
The question had become too specific ... and Kissinger darted right through the loophole.

HENRY KISSINGER:
I have no arrangement to meet him. I do not expect to meet him in Damascus.

TED KOPPEL:
The meeting took place in Cyprus.

HENRY KISSINGER:
And we saw Gromyko in order to make clear that what we're attempting to do in the Middle East was not directed against the Soviet Union but at the purpose of promoting peace and to enlist, if not Soviet cooperation, at least Soviet acquiescence in the effort.

TED KOPPEL:
In every negotiation Kissinger is guided by the same principle ... mutuality of interest. Both sides must have a vested interest in the outcome.

(MORE)
TED KOPPEL: (CONT)

Both sides must be able to live with the results. And since clearly, the Soviets did cooperate... or at least acquiesce in the Syrian-Israeli disengagement, it must be assumed Kissinger gave them good reason for doing so. And as yet, we have no way of knowing what warnings or promises he delivered.

Henry Kissinger already threatens to become a legend... the most admired man in America... the magician... the miracle worker. It has reached the point, in fact, of making even Kissinger somewhat uneasy.

HENRY KISSINGER:

The thing in a way, that's most eerie to me is the expectation that no matter what the problem... I'm going to settle it on one trip and that there's an unending supply of magical solutions.

STANLEY HOFFMANN:

Nothing succeeds like success until one falls off the flying trapeze... at which point everybody suddenly discovers what was always wrong with you. I hope it doesn't happen to him. I'm quite sure that if should be happen to him he will not be surprised. He has very few illusions about the human race, it seems to me.

JOSEPH KRAFT:

In every contact that I've had with Henry Kissinger he really has betrayed a sense of how awful things can get. Uh that life can be bad. That life can be very very tragic.
TED KOPPEL:

Henry Kissinger is one of the few men in this administration who remains unscarred by Watergate. And indeed there is no reason to believe that Kissinger played any active role in matters outside the field of foreign affairs. But the President's former Chief of Staff, Bob Haldeman implied ... and he would go no further ... that Kissinger knew more about Watergate than is generally assumed.

H. R. HALDEMAN:

We had a daily senior staff meeting every morning in my office. And that, I think, was effective. Henry, as did the other senior staff people attended those meetings regularly and used them to keep us posted on his affairs ... As well as to keep himself posted on non-national security affairs. And uh, the intercommunication was in no way limited to the daily staff meeting. But that was a good starting point. Henry worked very closely with John Ehrlichman ... with me ... with George Schultz and with others in the White House over the years as time went on.

TED KOPPEL:

In the concluding segment of this program, the Secretary will have an opportunity to respond.

Then too, there is the issue of the President. Fighting for his political life on one front, conducting foreign policy on the other. What effect does that have on Kissinger?

(MORE)
TED KOPPEL: (CONT)

That too is an issue that will be raised with the Secretary in the next segment.

For the moment, at least, Henry Kissinger may be the best thing we've got going for us.

HENRY KISSINGER:

I think the American people now are looking for something ... something to believe in ... and they're looking for a symbol of continuity that is not too related to day-to-day politics. In fact, it's not related at all to day-to-day politics. Something that stands for the country ... and for peace and for basic values. And, uh, whatever the tactical successes, that's how I try to conduct my office.
HOWARD K. SMITH

Mr. Secretary, has Watergate had any effect on your handling of foreign policy?

HENRY KISSINGER

As a professor I would have said that it is impossible for the central authority of a government to be so systematically under attack...without our foreign policy suffering. Nevertheless, it is also true that I have not noticed any significant impairment of the conduct of our foreign policy.

TED KOPPEL

Mr. Secretary, a few days ago the American public saw something that they rarely see and that is Henry Kissinger losing his temper at the press conference and it was on the subject of wiretapping. I wonder if you quietly, calmly would explain the whole context of the wiretapping in 1969.

HENRY KISSINGER

In 1969 a series of major leaks occurred. The President decided after consultation with the Attorney General and the Director of the FBI to institute or to re-institute a system that had existed in the United States government since the Presidency of Franklin Roosevelt...namely the use of wire taps to protect (MORE)
HENRY KISSINGER (CONT)
national security information. The questions that are raised is was this procedure legal. There's no question that it was legal when it was ordered by the President...did it follow proper procedures...every individual case was authorized by the Attorney General and requested by the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. In no case did it concern any other matter except the leakage of national security information.

TED KOPPEL
Now the other question that remains is whether or not you initiated or whether the President initiated the wire tap?

HENRY KISSINGER
The President ordered the institution of the system of wire taps. I was ordered as part of this system to supply the names of individuals who had had access to information that had leaked.

TED KOPPEL
In the transcript there is an oblique reference by the President in which he says -- and I don't have the language down correctly -- that he asked, he being you in this instance, that it be done, the wire tapping and I assumed it was...is there some way you can explain that reference?
HENRY KISSINGER

I, uh, there's a large unintelligible section in that reference and uh, I cannot explain the reference...it was part of another conversation...it must have been based on a mis-apprehension...the facts supported by the records are exactly as I have described them.

TED KOPPEL

Is it possible that a man who has such sensitive antennae as yourself who is so attuned to the careful nuances of language, that he could be around the White House and attend these senior staff meetings that Haldeman referred to without being aware of Watergate and its related matters...the cover up.

HENRY KISSINGER

Watergate was never discussed at any of the staff meetings. Indeed, Mr. Haldeman took the position that he didn't know anything about Watergate and, therefore, it couldn't be discussed. Uh, hard as this may be to believe, I never had any knowledge of Watergate or its related matters because Watergate and its related matters never came up at any staff meeting.
HOWARD K. SMITH

Can you define where Richard Nixon begins and ends and where Henry Kissinger begins and ends in the carrying out in the conception of American foreign policy?

HENRY KISSINGER

It would be very hard to say where one man's contribution begins and the other ones ends, but there is no doubt about the following... The hard decisions must be made by the President. The ultimate responsibility for those decisions rests with the President and not with the Secretary of State. He has the responsibility and, therefore, he deserves the credit for it.

HOWARD K. SMITH

It's said that your relations with President Nixon are very formal and rather distant and aloof. Is that true?

HENRY KISSINGER

My relations with the President are very business like and concentrating on on substance.

TED KOPPEL

Mr. Secretary, you've expressed the point of view that the President is fully justified in going overseas at this time to the Middle
TED KOPPEL (CONT)

East and then later this month on to Moscow. If you ever felt that foreign policy was being manipulated for the sake of domestic political reasons what would you do?

HENRY KISSINGER

I would resign...and I would say so publicly. Foreign policy has to reflect the continuing values of the American people and it cannot be the subject of partisan policy.

HOWARD K. SMITH

Thank you, Mr. Secretary...We've had fifty-six Secretaries of State and without a longer perspective it's just about impossible to try to rate Henry Kissinger among them. But this is a fair hazard. Among the fifty-six something less than a dozen have made outstanding contributions to keeping the untidy gain of nations in constructive check. I believe there is at least enough evidence to suggest this...that number fifty-six will be included in the few. For Ted Koppel who made this portrait and for me who put a small frame around it this is Howard K. Smith, good evening.