IeS© to the NEWS

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RELEASE: June 17

PITFALLS OF PERSONAL DIPLOMACY

The psychological change that takes place in most men when they move into positions of great power is a phenomenon that has been commented on by philosophers through the ages•. Shakespeare declaimed: "Upon what meat does this our Caesar feed, that he is grown so great?" Lord Acton's famous aphorism is: "Power tends to corrupt."

When Gerald Ford moved into the White House, he was Mr. Middle America, a humble man without any pretensions. Yet, a recent New York Times dispatch quotes several White House aides as saying that the President sets great store by personal diplomacy and believes he can do much in direct contacts with foreign leaders.

This is the precise self-delusion on the part of American Presi dents that has caused more foreign policy mistakes than any other. Back in 942, President Franklin Roosevelt told Winston Churchill: "I think I can personally handle Stalin better than either your Foreign Office or my State Department."

And in 1943, before the sellout conferences of Teheran and Yalta, President Roosevelt told Ambassador William Bullitt: "I have just a hunch that Stalin doesn't want anything but security for his country, and I think that if I giye him everything I possibly can and ask noth ing from him in return, noblesse oblige, he won't try to annex any thing and will work for world democracy and peace."

The fact is that Stalin had!!£ impulses of honorable conduct, and he **did** annex everything he could. President Roosevelt held all the cards of mobilized U.S. military superiority, plus a monopoly of the atom bomb.

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In addition, he was a consummate politician, an eloquent speaker, and a persuasive personality. Yet, the wily Stalin outsmarted him be cause Roosevelt was a prisoner of his own self-delusion about his imagined expertise in personal diplomacy.

When President Ford goes to the international bargaining table, he lacks all the chips that Roosevelt had. Because of the strategic missile freeze imposed on our.country during the last seven years while the Soviets have added 1,000 intercontinental nuclear missiles to their forces, President Ford must deal from a position of military inferiority.

How, therefore, could President Ford and his staff have such an inflated vision of their own abilities as to think that he can succeed where Roosevelt failed?

The same New York Times story quotes another aide of Ford as say ing, "He is a pragmatist who approaches foreign policy on a problem-by problem basis. He doesn't have any structured world view."

That is true. The trouble, is, U.S. foreign policy is being made by Henry Kissinger and he does, indeed, have a structured view of the world. His "new world order" is a world in which the Soviets are the number-one military power, while we try to preserve the illusion of detente by bribing them with the industrial and agricultural goodies of the American free enterprise system that the hopelessly inefficient Socialist system is unable to produce.

The trouble with Kissinger's structured world view is that, as the Soviets grow stronger on subsidies from us, the United States will soon no longer be master of our own destiny.

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