

characteristic. We will have to see whether that succeeded, and if it didn't succeed, somebody else will have to do it.

—*What was the high spot . . . The ending of the Viet Nam war, manoeuvring the Middle East war in 1973 and the armistice mediation, or perhaps the meeting with the Chinese leaders in Peking?*

KISSINGER: Well, each of these had tremendous qualities for me personally. Probably, what I wanted most to achieve was to end the Viet Nam War under decent conditions.

—*Must it not have been a great shock to you and something like a great moral defeat when you saw on television your Ambassador in Saigon running up to a helicopter on the roof of his Embassy with the Stars-and-Stripes under his arm?*

KISSINGER: It was a very painful occasion. And we did it to ourselves by reducing aid to Viet Nam in each peacetime year by 25%. But it was still better that we had to evacuate with 1,200 men: imagine the scene if we had had to do it with 500,000 men.

—*You once prophesied that the whole of Europe*

would possibly be Marxist in ten years' time. Was that merely a melancholy mood, or is that your conviction?

KISSINGER: No, there is some folklore that will never subside, and I did not say that all of Western Europe would be Marxist in ten years.

—*We do not know of any Marxist country. Do you know of one?*

KISSINGER: Certainly not East of the Iron Curtain.

DR KISSINGER, you are now 55 years old and if one thinks of your career, you have had one of the most interesting assignments a man can have in world politics. Talleyrand was Foreign Minister of France four times (the last time at the age of 61). Should—or must—the world reckon with Henry Kissinger twice becoming US Secretary of State?

KISSINGER: We cannot demoralise the professional Foreign Service with this prospect before them.

Method

I will write poems
like Omar Sharif in *Doctor Zhivago*.
On snowy mornings
I will leave my wife sleeping
and slip into a room
empty except for a table and chair.
Eyes growing moist, Adam's apple throbbing,
I will stare at the winter
and begin to write madly
in a neat hand, blotting nothing.
In an hour and a half I will tear from my brain
eight lyrics, two odes and the first third of an epic!
Then my wife will appear—radiant,
loving, amazed at my genius—
and we will have coffee.

If the conditions are right,
and you know what you're doing,
poetry's easy.

Geoffrey Smith

George MacBeth

By Way of a Prologue

I
Imagine, in England,
Someone who is looking at the sun moving
Through the dilapidated remnants
Of the Eastern hemisphere. His name is Harry, but
He is not, or is not yet,
That insouciant, military progenitor
Whom all will recall
From the history of Agincourt. He is Harry Crosby.

II
Imagine, gentlemen,
That he has a pair of binoculars
Constructed of good German glass
And that he is watching that red, singular orb
With a kind of passion
Most of us give only to women. He is entirely possessed
With the magnificent, celestial
Burnish of the solar energy. He is Harry Crosby.

III
Imagine, in your mind's eye,
Two people lying dead on a bed in
A small first-floor room
In an uptown hotel in New York City. It is nineteen
Twenty nine
And the stock market is about to crash, but
That is not why the young man
With the smoking gun in his hand has fired. He is Harry Crosby.

IV
Imagine the winter sun
Glittering through the forgotten window on the still
Beautiful eyes
Of the girl he has killed by a shot in the brain
Or who has perhaps
Killed herself, we are not sure, by a shot
Pre-arranged with him, or
Not pre-arranged, and has left him alive. He is Harry Crosby.

V
Imagine that just one second
Ago the blood welled from a single wound in her head
And the girl died
In the path of the sun driving across Manhattan
Towards a new decade
And imagine that Harry Crosby who has been
In love with her, as with many others,
Has taken the last light on his shaking brow. And the play is about to begin.

VI
Imagine that somewhere in Heaven
The nationality of catastrophe has become incidental