

TELCON

Saville Davis/Kissinger

3:04 pm 12/17/70

*File*

D: I just returned to the office 10 minutes ago and wondered how I can look you in the eye.

K: You can't.

D: Of course not. May I talk for background.

K: Sure.

D: The story was written by Selover from State Dept. sources. I deal with the WH and stay away from State and he works with State and stays away from the WH. He wrote it except for sections which quote your staff. He doesn't pin it on them and it's done on his authority.

K: I don't agree that those quotes are true. For instance, even I don't know how many choices the President had for Secretary of State let alone my staff.

D: The worst point of the thing are those quotes without clarification of the Kissinger staff. He has had a tremendous amount of pressure from Boston to sharpen up our stories. I am retiring on May 1 and the new bureau chief --

K: I am sorry to hear that.

D: I will be my own boss so I can find out if I have a personality.

K: I wouldn't worry about that.

D: That's irrelevant to this. Because of the set up here where we don't pre-read stories --

K: "The Secretary of State is much too forgiving on the Soviet role in cease fire violations." I don't believe that and my Middle East expert, on deep background, if I have a criticism of him is that he is too pro-Arab so I cannot imagine who could have said this.

D: I am feeling extremely badly.

K: What was said on SALT is equally unfair.

D: I wouldn't have believed it myself.

K: It's the opposite of the truth. On Communist China, I haven't been so outraged - I know you are a man of honor. I would tell you the truth on deep background -- the truth on these.

Davis/Kissinger

5:04 pm

12/17/70

-2-

D: I would like to see what we can do without that information on it because we don't need it and then we can sit down and talk about it. It was put in by the second string. It was put in the paper in a hurry. No one has the capability of publishing this. I saw the story and hit the ceiling. The new man here hit the ceiling and he really hasn't got a feel for this yet. The person who wrote it is very nice and conscientious. He has obviously gone beyond ~~his~~ his depth.

K: Any other newspaper I would question their motives.

D: That's what hurts me. As far as the paper is concerned we are all very distressed about it. The motives of people who gave the information are suspect.

K: They are not helping their Secy. either. They think they are by making him the hero and me the villain. I haven't claimed credit for the decisions but this isn't the point.

D: I don't even know what to do about it. I have been sitting here for 10 mins. trying to figure it out. I can correct it by presenting a different view of the situation but that never catches up. He is a new man at foreign policy and shouldn't have tried this.

K: Or checked it with me.

D: But it says all staff and the staff must reflect the person who runs the staff.

K: Not fair to speak even about the staff.

K: You haven't mentioned the worst things.

K: SALT --

D: That and others are not good politically.

K: Politically it's all horrible. "Kissinger staff is frankly willing to widen the war."

D: I thought that was particularly rough.

K: Who on my staff?

D: At this stage I don't know because I haven't talked with Selover. He isn't here.

K: Would you like to think about it?

D: Yes. It's a rough one because you don't know how to correct it but you don't know how and might make more of it but then the record is the record. I will

Davis/Kissinger

3:04 pm 12/17/70

-3-

D:(cont) think about it.

K: Hope to see you soon. You don't have to explain how you feel.

D: Thanks for calling and I will put my thinking cap on.