

TELCON

Mr. Kissinger/Mr. Crewdson

9/22/73 6:15 p.m.

C: The story is somebody tapped your telephone

K: On what basis are we talking here?

C: Let's go on background for the time being or even deep background and then we won't have to go off the record, unless--

K: I beg your pardon?

C: I said I'm reluctant to go entirely off-the-record unless you think it's moreadvisable.

K: You know this is not the day in which I'm particularly eager to discuss those things.

C: I understand.

and

K: Why not tell me what the problem is and ~~then~~ let's do it off-the-record for a moment--then if you tell me you need to have some other basis we can discuss it.

C: All right, that's fine. The problem simply is that I have been told by a source who is not in the executive branch that the "plumbers" in his words--put a tap on some telephone used by you at some point in the last 4-1/2 years. When he says plumbers, I don't know who he's referring to--I don't think he means the generic plumbers in the sense of Krogh and Young, I think he probably means the Caufield people--it was not done by the FBI I know that, it was not done by the Secret Service, I think --I don't know when it was done, I don't know where, but this fellow told me that-

K: Is he reliable?

C: Well you know he has been up to now, but there is always a first time--but he further told me that you had been told that this had been done. That you knew of it?

K: When it happened?

C: No afterwards.

K: There is a limit to masochism.

C: I'd like to write this story--I don't have many details and I think the story would have done you a fair amount of damage last week, probably not any now--

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K: I don't know why it would do me damage.

C: Certainly cause other questions to be asked for the Senate committee and might have delayed things even a bit longer. But now that that is all tucked away

K: Well Mr. Crewdson, in all honesty, I really don't know anything about it. I've had--this is off-the-record--I've had ideas but I really don't know anything authoritative. I really don't

C: You've got suspicions but not--

K: Not fact

C: Not fact--no one has ever come to you in a formal way and said we think you ought to know that we had your phone wired.

K: That is correct.

C: Can you tell me something about your suspicions?

K: No, I don't want to go

C: That would be helpful.

K: No, because that is no credit to anybody--Bill Safire mentioned it to me and-- don't know enough about it.

C: Oh I mentioned it to Bill--didn't know whether he called you or not --I'm at an impasse

K: I just don't want to talk about any--whatever I can tell you I have never been formally told

C: Would you object to this sort of a story appearing.

K: I don't think it does anybody any good, but if you--it really depends on your confidence in your source.

C: Even if my confidence in my source is complete--this involves you in rather a personal way--and if you don't think it is going to ^{do} get you or anybody else any good, perhaps there is no value, you know in reporting it for the sake of reporting it.

K: I don't see how it can do me any good--I don't think it does me any harm.

C: That's all problematical--I could argue either side of that question--and there's no point in doing that.



K: How could it do me any harm--except by opening that whole issue over and over

C: The problem ^{is} ~~is~~ of course whenever it is disclosed that someone's telephone is tapped, then the great minds of the American people, the suspicion is born that others in power believed this person to be in some way untrustworthy. The positive aspect is if you know if they were tapping you, then what you say about your minimal role in the other wire taps might also be substantiated and reinforced.

K: I know what I said about my role in the other wiretapp--its true.

C: Ah yes, indeed, I'm sure--

K: I don't know that to be true and in fact if anything understated in relation ~~to~~ to--be Mr. Crewdson--I really feel as far as I'm concerned, I'd just as soon not have any more wire tap stories

C: Whether they involve you or not--or only if they involve you.

K: I really basically believe that that period ought to be put behind us at some point fairly soon

C: Of course--I don't mean to sound fecitious, but it is not the NY Times that was doing the tapping

K: Of course

C: The case of Tony Lake for example--that is very serious whether it was sloppiness or intentional--to leave it on after ~~it~~ he had gone to work for Mr. Muskie ~~for some~~ as one of his top aides, seems to me to be quite a serious matter.

K: O--Well, I'm not telling you not to pursue any of that. I mean you called me, I didn't call you.

C: Yes, indeed.

K And I have fully explained what I knew about these circumstances and--

C: I wish I could convince you to discuss the nature of your suspicions if only for my own guidance--

K No, I don't think I should--and they may be totally unfounded anyway, but I am assuming this conversation is off-the - record

C: Yes,

K: Thank you.