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TELECON
General Scowcroft/The Secretary
October 16, 1975
Time: 8:55 a. m.

RELEASED IN PART
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K: You can't say that I don't make news.

S: God, what a disaster.

K: You know, it really is filthy when they hear the thing is working and they don't tell you.

S: They don't tell you, they don't turn it off and the press takes advantage of the inadvertency.

K: Actually what I said, as I remember--this is excerpted obviously. I told her I thought Watergate was unfair. Yes, he was a difficult and unpleasant man. But it was laudatory. Take away the excerpts and it looks bad.

S: It looks bad.

K: What can I do?

S: There isn't anything really you can do. It upset me. I don't know what the hell you can do. It is very disturbing. Our friend out there is bound to be upset.

K: What can I do? If I call him, I will make it worse.

S: I don't know what to recommend. I really don't know. I really don't.

K: The hell of it is I was going to call him to tell him I was going to China.

S: Oh, jeeze, you ought to do that.

K: For a dinner conversation, this wasn't bad. You have to remember all of them consider him a monster. When you say friendly things about him you have to balance it.

S: I think it is inexcusable that that was let on.

K: And it was inexcusable that they printed it. That was a three-hour dinner and it stands to reason I must have said a lot of things.

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- S: It could go on for days. Was it the first part or the last part of the dinner?
- K: Basically, I told her Watergate was an injustice. I am glad they are not printing that. That is what the conversation was about. She was asking me who the good Presidents were.
- S: And you answered that ...
- K: Roosevelt and Truman and that I was sort of thinking better of Eisenhower. She said, what about Kennedy? And I said some critical things about Kennedy. Then I said you would be surprised but I think Nixon was one of our better Presidents. That amazed her. And it was in that context. You can see that I said that.
- S: That is in there. But it is buried under criticism. That is part of the problem. They put your sentences together in a way to convey the impression they wanted to convey.
- K: I think I better call him and tell him. I know he will never believe it. I know I will never catch up with him that I was praising him, not criticizing him.
- S: On balance, I do.
- K: Have you seen the Les Gelb article?
- S: No.
- K: Do you know about it?
- S: No, what is it on?
- K: Pact with Soviets on missile curbs reported in peril. U. S. officials differing with Kissinger doubt an early resolution of issues. Then he goes on with "the many understandings that the officials said had been created by sloppy and hurried negotiations between President Ford and Brezhnev in Vladivostok last November coupled with several instances of Mr. Ford and Mr. Kissinger backing away from concessions previously made."

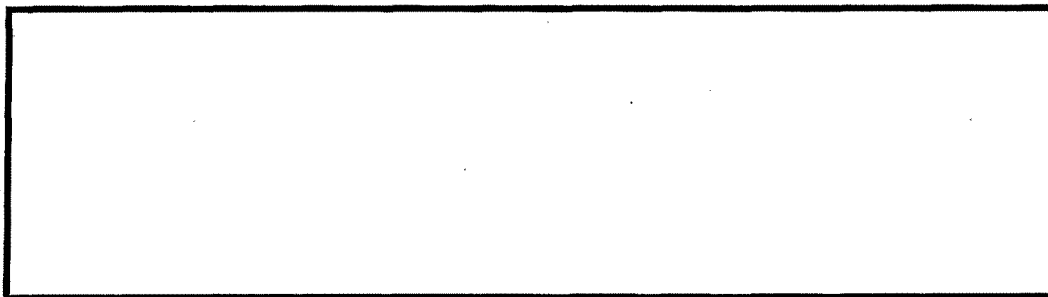
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- S: I see it now. It's right on the front page. Guess where that comes from? He didn't get all that from Defense. They wouldn't be putting out the line that SALT too was in peril.
- K: Why?
- S: Their line is that the Russians have to accept anything we offer because they are desperate.
- K: The basic argument of their position when I said 90 percent done I am wrong. You read that article. This is 95 percent --
- S: From Defense.
- K: From Defense.
- S: Let me read the thing. I don't know how I missed it.
- K: The Backfire problem emerged because Mr. Kissinger in November never stated at Vladivostok that this new bomber should be included in the ceiling. When at Pentagon insistence he later raised the issue Moscow contended that the Backfire was only a medium-range bomber and should not be included. The issue of the cruise missile was left ambiguous in Vladivostok.



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- K: It surely didn't catch him before the Les Gelb article.
- S: Not surprising. Les submits things a day or two ahead.
- K: How would you like at the UNO I said 30 years isn't a long time but in cases of horses and international organizations it is a ripe old age. Is that appropriate for the UN?
- S: (laughter). I think it is great. Time to take them out and shoot them. That is very good. Oh, well.

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- K: I don't see what I can do.
- S: I think you have to call him. You know how he will be. If you don't call him, it will sit and build and build.
- K: My calling him will make matters awful. He will be convinced I said things worse.
- S: What if you don't call him?
- K: I have to call him.
- S: If you don't, then he will think even worse.
- K: Would it occur to you at a dinner conversation with a speaker of the Canadian Parliament that you couldn't make such comments?
- S: Hell no. It's ordinary dinner chit-chat. At the last State dinner Mrs. Chandler and I were talking along the same lines about him. It is completely innocuous. When you have a microphone though, then it is official.
- K: I hold it against the Canadians for not turning it off. They must have had a press guy there.
- S: They certainly must have had somebody there. Talk about invasion of privacy. That is disgraceful.
- K: Well, okay, I am coming over.
- S: See you in a bit.
- K: Okay.

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