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TELECON
Mr. Ted Koppel/Secretary Kissinger
November 14, 1975
Time: 5:45 p.m.

RELEASED IN FULL

K: Can I ask you this question. Do you think people understand what has been going on?

TK: No.

K: Because none of the documents that they subpoenaed concern me, they concern former Secretaries of State, not me.

TK: How about the one relating to Cyprus?

K: They settled that one long ago, I am not cited for contempt on that.

TK: Then no one understands it I am sure.

K: They asked for ten documents about covert operations.

TK: When you say former Secretaries of State that would have been during your period as Chairman of the NSC?

K: Three concern the period 1969 to 1972.

TK: Do they concern State Department activities?

K: Yes, on which the President invoked executive privilege.

TK: Do you want to do a form of press conference?

K: I don't know how much play this story will get.

TK: I have been off today so I just heard the reports about two hours ago. I am going to New York tomorrow. You are leaving for Paris tonight?

K: Yes. I am going to have to wait and see how it develops -- it is a White House issue.

TK: What can happen to you? It is now reported out of Committee?

K: The House can cite me for contempt. Everyone tells me we are going to win this case.

TK: What happens after that?

K: It goes to a court. But the damage is done. What do you think they will think about this in Korea or China?

TK: I don't think they know in this country, let alone there.

K: The average person hearing this thing thinks there is something wrong.

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TK: You can't do it in Paris?

K: No, I can't do anything until I get back. OK. Well...

TK: In this sense if you can explain it to me perhaps I can air it on my show tomorrow.

K: The thing that I am in contempt for is the ten documents the President said I couldn't turn over to the Congress.

TK: The President?

K: Yes, President Ford.

TK: Personally, had you recommended not to turn it over?

K: No, the recommendation came from an interdepartmental committee on which I didn't even serve. More likely the recommendation should be attributed to the Attorney General.

TK: Was it Levy or the one before him?

K: If you are this confused....

TK: My answer to you is that everyone is confused.

K: The subpoena was for ten documents between 1962 and 1972. All of them were written by the State Department. It doesn't make any difference whether I was in the White House because they were channeled by the White House.

TK: Was Rogers subpoenaed?

K: No, but three documents written by Rogers were and three by Rusk.

TK: Which subjects?

K: Ted, I can't go.. covert operations.

TK: More specifically than that.

K: I can't go into that. I didn't follow that myself. I wanted to get your judgment as to how confused you might be. My worst fears are being realized. If you can't understand it then the average person won't even have the beginning of a realization.

TK: Are any of the regulars going? I caution you about giving a backgrounder to some of the White House regulars -- you might be slaughtered.

K: The decision was not made by me. I knew at 10:00 this morning. It is a legal White House decision in which my recommendations were represented by a low level representative on the committee, but I didn't even get to instruct him.

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TK: See if you can ride it out for three or four days and then hold a news conference.

K: O.K. Thank you.

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