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TELCON

Sec Kissinger/Ben Bradlee (POST)

4/21/76; 4:14 p.m.

K: Given the hypocrisy and paranoia of this place there are two things I want to mention. Somebody told me--they said that the reason I didn't come to the George Stevens. . . .

B: (Laughter)

K: I was working on the Law of the Sea speech and can't get away.

B: I work on the theory occasionally in our enlightened self-interest to have a good time together.

K: The real reason I am calling is I have been told and read in John Osborne you are of the view because I did not respond to you that evening at the movie premier I therefore don't object to Woodward and Bernstein. My view is this. This is for you and I would be glad to sit down with you and go over it. Their really major significant mistakes both as to sources and as to context and sometimes as to part that concerns me. On the other hand, for me to get in a debate with them in which I repeat charges I cannot then explain. They will get their source who are self-serving guys to repeat it. It is a useless exercise. Therefore, I have taken the position I talk to nobody. Not to Osborne.

I will say no more about that book. That silence should not be construed as approval. What I would like to do, when all the sales that can be serviced are serviced I would like to sit down with you and go over what they have done because I think it has some _____ of journalistic effort. We can do it in a month or two. It doesn't. . . they have put together something rather staggering.

B: My feeling about the book is that 45 minutes with a good editor and _____ could have saved them 95 percent of their problem.

K: Somebody with a little sophistication of how a government works could have pointed out it is not so unusual when printed in a certain light.

B: The only reason it came up was someone _____ behind you or me was taking notes at a furious clip.

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K: I thought it sort of curious they have that one quote here.

B: I did see her. They said How come I revealed their source to Kissinger. I heard you say that you talked to Eisenhower and, oh, what's his name.

K: Buzhardt. What I got from what you said is this is apparently from the context.

B: It is.

K: If Eisenhower and Buzhardt say maybe these guys will say what they did say.

B: And when.

K: You didn't?

B: Of course, I didn't. I have been in this bunker so long.

K: You might blow it to Liv Ullman.

B: It has crossed my mind. Don't worry about either of those things. I am going to try to do some more writing and reporting and in a couple of months I am going to take you up on this.

K: Good.