

TELCON
April 21, 1973
9:35 a.m.
HAK-Len Garment

K: Hello.

G: Hello, Henry.

K: Len, my boy.

G: Yes.

K: You have great credibility with me but don't ever tell me your problems again.

G: What happened?

K: Well, everything you predicted is unfortunately coming true.

G: Uh, I have not seen the papers this morning.

K: Mitchell is now threatening higher-ups.

G: Um-huh. Oh yes. I've got a bad throat. I don't want you to think that I've...that's why my voice sounds this way. You sound very clear, Henry.

K: And, I've had another call from Ehrlichman.

G: Yeah.

K: Who's telling me that Haldeman and the President are like siamese twins. If one goes, the other goes.

G: Well, you don't suppose he's

K: Trying to threaten, do you?

G: Pardon me?

K: You don't suppose he's trying to threaten?

G: Well, Ehrlichman already tried to say...that he would like to be helpful in prying them loose.

K: I don't know.

G: Where is he calling from?

K: Camp David.

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K: They are both up there together.

G: Well, that's crazy...that they're siamese twins. They're behaving that way, but they have been known....well, siamese twins can be separated. Silly talk. Did he tell you anything else?

K: No.

G: He called just to say that?

K: More or less.

G: I don't understand that.

K: I'm really getting worried about what it does, you know... if this goes much further we won't have a foreign policy left.

G: I agree.

K: And, it's got absolutely nothing to do anymore with who is liable criminally.

G: No, no, not at all.

K: There are a lot of guys who aren't criminally liable whom you don't want in the White House.

G: Ah, I heard a very funny conversation yesterday with a very trusted...well, he just walked into the office to say hell, this is Bob Semple and he just spoke non-stop. And I just sat there and gave him a bourbon and the essence of what he said was no matter what happens here the President said the chips should fall where they may. For heavens sake, make sure that happens and that the President is saved. No matter what. You know, everybody knows everything.

K: It's the only issue that is left. When we save the President. Your instinct was right because the if the staff reaches so far that it's done in the last minute I don't know if he can be.

G: Yeah. Then I think it may move to congressional...you know, to another stage. Well, then, the country is torn apart. I mean, that can't be permitted to happen.

K: You know, none of them has an explanation. Supposing these were legal funds. That won't stand up either.

G: That doesn't make any difference.

K: Well, suppose they paid with legal fees. Why do you pay the legal fees of somebody who did something against...

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G: Oh, lord, Henry, you can't . All of these funds were demanded by these men and by their wives and by their lawyers. And its a subject of testimony now. Now it isn't a question of dealing of some abstract proposition. The realities of these matters is of the subject of testimony

K: Well, this is without a doubt the most depressing period that I know in our history. I mean there must have been worse but I wasn't part of them.

G: Richard Rovere spotted this as long as three weeks ago when he wrote -- it seemed to me that was his hand on Talk of the Town--

K: What did he say?

G: That was in the New Yorker. He said the country is in for the most devastating period in its history.

K: Look, when you told me last week about this time I had to accept some of it intellectually but it was almost beyond my belief. It was beyond my emotional belief. Because another thing that is bound to come out now --one has to assume Watergate could not have been an isolated incident.

G: It was not.

K: Because you don't throw that much machinery into motion if it was even one isolated --even if you assume it was an authorized incident.

G: It was part of a long, wide range of events--

K: But, that's going to come out too, isn't it?

G: Well, I think, as I said to you, last week, that point can be reached if action is taken where a variety of human institutional constitutional bargains can be struck.

K: Yeah, but not much longer.

G: Not much longer . This is the weekend of the cruxifixion and the resurrection -- it's the time for action.

K: I mean if your advice had been taken last week--

G: Right.

K: We would have been spared a week of testimony.

G: That's right.

K: I had every impression that Dean and Company are going to . .

G: Talk, talk, talk.

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K: Spill their guts from now on.

G: It's not a question of impressions--it's a fact. ↗

✱ Although it isn't clear to me what they think they are accomplishing. Well, they-- Dean himself urged the President--last Monday he drafted a statement-- it was very much like mine to the point where the President asked me to get together with him and compare statements. And, his statement to the President called for the --announce the suspensional resignation of Dean and Haldeman and Magruder and Straghan and..

K: You know that I knew so much that I thought it was spelled STRONG. Why has he changed now?

G: Well, Dean hasn't changed. Dean--he can't announce it himself. I don't understand, why has he changed? We feel that the others should take responsibility that we feel is rightly theirs. That he was just following orders.

K: Well, if these stories are right that Dean knew about the bugging and then was put in charge of the investigation--in addition to the unbelievable immorality the incredible instupidity.

G: Correct. Well, we're past the point of diagnoses and analyses. The question is whether anything can be done that will cause some action to be taken.

K: Blood flowing. Blood up to the neck.

G: Well, how can that be done?

K: Don't you think?

G: Of course. What do you mean, don't I like? I told you last week, Henry.

K: Blood and total dissociation. A frontal attack on these guys saying I was betrayed by my closest friends. It was a horrible tragedy. But we'd need a guy who would be willing to set up them. What if these guys say no, it was all done in the Oval Office?

G: Um huh. K I don't know whether it was. I'm just wondering if they would say that.

G: God knows what they would say. But I think people would set on them like a lynch mob to tear their tongues out.

K: It's better than having it---because it will be said anyway. If he doesn't do it it will be said that Bruce was the ...

G: Right, in the Oval Office. I don't think people will listen to them or believe that. It's in the first order of importance.

K:

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K: Well, OK Mr. Garment.

G: I've brought all my papers home. I'm going to sit him and think and pray at this point.

K: I think the best thing is to leave the President alone. I don't think he needs advice.

G: A very strong memorandum was put in Haldeman's hands yesterday explaining as logically as possible why he should take action. But, it won't help.

K: Not even remotely. He doesn't even understand what the issue is.

G: Um huh.

K: He puts it entirely in to whether he can defend himself against criminal charges.

G: Obsessive behavior. Well, Eric Erickson is going to be in town next week. We'll put it all to him for...

K: Well, supposing he could survive all this. Which is inconceivable. But, ...

G: I can't conceive of this government continuing with him in..

K: But, how the hell, suppose he survives and then becomes fair game again for the usual attacks.

G: That's right. I can't even say.....what do you mean, fair game?

K: You know, right now they are laying off the President and the White House because they think they got us going anyway. But, supposing some of them get patched together and Senators say....just keep quoting everything that was said in the last year.

G: Exactly.

K: There even isn't any question of surviving it criminally.

G: Christ almighty. 10 days ago. If he had acted then. We'd have all that time. Look what has happened in this period of time.

K: On television now, they are playing tapes of what was said last year. I saw on the news summary--what they were doing--they played everything that Mitchell said last year and what he said yesterday.

G: Um huh. And this will go on to the next stage and then the next stage.

K: Well--

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G: Are you at the office or home?

K: At the office.

G: Yeah. O.K.

K: I'll talk to you later. Good. Thank you Len.

G: Bye.

