

SD/03



TELCON
Rumsfeld
Sec. Kissinger
December 23, 1974
9:35 a.m.

RELEASE IN FULL

K: Did I wake you up.

R: You did. Someday I will wake you up.

K: I told them not to wake you up but I will be going into a meeting soon.

R: I am glad you called.

K: I want to talk to you about the Helms matter. I don't know the facts remotely. I have no knowledge whatever to what body of fact it refers. If there were any such activities they were not reported to the NSC office but I do know that Cy Hersch is a son-of-a-bitch and I think for a senior official to get villified without opposition from the Administration on the basis of such an article is dangerous business. There are no facts, just allegations. First, we should ask Colby to give us a report on the body of fact to which this refers whatever it is. What could Hersch be referring to. If they conducted investigations of Americans -- for what purpose. See what I mean. At least then we would know what we are talking about. I don't know now.

R: That is why I tried to reach you or Brent and I finally got Kennedy.

K: I did not know you tried to reach me.

R: We were trying to figure out if we should try to get a report.

K: Ask him for a body of fact through NSC channels which this could possibly refer. I don't know of any where in investigating foreign agents they run across Americans. If the files get constituted it could be in this way. Perhaps they did investigations for Nixon. I don't know whom they report them to. They certainly never reported them to us and if they reported them to Halderman and Ehrlichman why didn't that come out earlier.

R: Yes. Why don't you...

K: I don't think Nessen should make any -- for the President to have said he ordered it stopped gave it a dignity it does not deserve.



TELCON
Rumsfeld
p. 2

R: I don't think he said that.

K: That is what they are playing.

R: My understanding was that he said that he has been assured by (Colby?) that it is not going on at the present time.

K: The way they are playing it is that it had been going on.

R: That is really life. The President doesn't know whether it has or not.

K: Right. I am not saying it has or has not. I am saying I do not know. It is not fair to Helms. What we have is an article by Hersch which makes some concrete allegations. It says they are shocked by what they found but it does not say what they found.

R: I suggested to Kennedy that you two might want to talke to Schlesinger ~~and~~ as well as Colby.

K: Let me make the following suggestion. I will ask Colby for a written report for the President's use. I do not know what body of fact this could be referring to. We will ask Schlesinger the same question. Nessen then can say the President has asked for a written report and he will decide what to do after he has seen this report. That way we look disciplined and thoughtful. Obviously the CIA must operate within the law. I don't think we shuld express an opinion on an investigation at this point. I am saying at State that if any~~thing~~ Congressional Committee wants Helms, of course, we will bring him back.

R: O.K.

K: Do you agree with that.

R: Sounds sensible to me. I am a little groggy. Let me think about it. Are you sending anything out in writing.

K: I will send it out as soon as I can. I have nothing to send now.

R: No papers comong out.

K: I will ask for a written report from Colby and ask for a written report and send it to you within 48 hours. I think we should have a written rport and it should go to the President.



Rumsfeld
p.3

R: O.K. Let me think about this. Sounds like the way to handle it to me. Interestingly, it sounds the way the President handled it from off the top of his head in talking with the press yesterday.

K: I think if we give too much credence without looking into it we will demoralize everybody. Helms is a public, decent, servant until proven otherwise. I will call Colby then.

R: Good.

END