

**February 5, 1972**

**MEMORANDUM FOR: MR. KISSINGER**  
**FROM: LES JANKA**  
**SUBJECT: Reply to CBS Editorial**

**WCBS - TV in New York City has sent you a copy of a recent editorial on the Anderson leaks and government secrecy and invites you to write or tape a public response.**

**The attached reply declines a public response but indicates that our current study of declassification process should help meet the problem.**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That you sign the response at Tab A.**

LJ:hc

FEB 17 1972

**Dear Mr. Kohler:**

**Thank you for bringing to my attention the WCBS-TV editorial dealing with the problems of government security classification.**

**While neither my time nor my position permit me the luxury of a public reply to your editorial, I want you to know that this problem is one that has been receiving careful study within the Administration. In the near future, we expect to have the results of a year-long study of our classification-declassification processes. The existing system will be improved in order to make it more responsive to the public's right to know while more secure on those matters which correctly must be kept in confidence for reasons of national security.**

**In the meantime, I wish you the best in your efforts to improve the level of public dialogue on important issues of public policy.**

**Best regards,**

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**Henry A. Kissinger**

**Mr. Peter C. Kohler  
Director of Editorials  
WCBS-TV  
51 West 52 Street  
New York, New York 10019**

LJ:nm:2/4/72

WCBS-TV  
CBS Television Stations  
A Division of Columbia Broadcasting System, Inc.  
51 West 52 Street  
New York, New York 10019  
(212) 765-4321

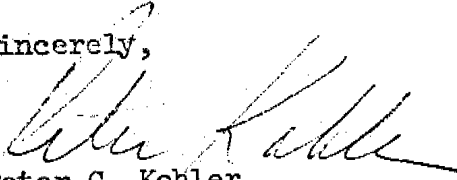
Dear Mr. Kissinger:

Enclosed is an editorial which might be of interest to you.

It is our policy to provide broadcast time for those who differ with the opinions expressed in our editorials. We will consider a request from you for reply time on WCBS-TV should you wish to make such a request. If you do, please contact my office at your earliest convenience.

Arrangements can be made to tape the reply in Washington or at our studios in New York City.

Sincerely,



Peter C. Kohler  
Director of Editorials

Dr. Henry A. Kissinger  
Assistant to the President  
for National Security Affairs  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

January 31, 1972

enclosure/TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

Sue Cott

January 24, 1972

6:55 P.M.

Administration plumbers are busy in Washington trying to plug up the leaks of classified information which have been oozing to the press. It started this time when secret minutes of the National Security Council were disclosed by columnist Jack Anderson. Last year, the release of the Pentagon Papers caused a similar furor.

Apart from the respective merits of the Anderson Papers and the Pentagon Papers, they do have one thing in common. Both sets of documents were stamped "Top Secret", "Confidential" or "secret-sensitive," and they raise the question -- is the rubber stamp being used in the broad interest of protecting national security or rather in the private interest of protecting the reputation or credibility of certain individuals?

While we believe national security should always be safeguarded, we also feel that the classified stamp has been wielded too promiscuously, and that much of what is now labeled "top secret" might much more aptly be labeled "embarrassing."

What we should learn from the Anderson Papers and the Pentagon Papers is that we really need a better system of classifying government materials.

In a democracy, citizens have a right to know what is being done in their name. That, of course, doesn't mean knowing every detail of every meeting -- and certainly not about negotiations in progress with other nations. But there must be a way of separating what really should be confidential from the rest.

Several congressional committees will be holding hearings on this problem this Spring, and we hope they develop a better approach, perhaps by establishing an independent commission to rule on the classification of documents.

Democracies shouldn't operate in the dark. If, as Justice Brandeis wrote, "Sunlight is the best disinfectant -- electric light, the most efficient policeman," -- let there be light.