

Oral history interview with H. R. Haldeman
conducted by Raymond H. Geselbracht
in Mr. Haldeman's home in Santa Barbara, California
on April 12, 1988

RHG: Mr. Haldeman, yesterday we were talking about the first White House staff during this shakedown period. I noticed many entries [in Haldeman's journal] during this time about putting [John D.] Ehrlichman in place as the domestic policy person. One of the things that surprised me about this was that it was slow in developing, and I would judge from reading your journal that the idea of using Ehrlichman was first suggested in a staff meeting. Then you had to sell the idea to the President and maybe even just as important at least sell the idea to Ehrlichman. I take it he thought about it for quite a long while. Could you describe that?

HRH: I think your overall description is basically accurate. The need came up very quickly, very early on, and how to deal with it. The need for somebody in general control of operations and procedures, and so forth, on the domestic side, as [Henry] Kissinger was on the foreign policy side, became almost immediately evident, even though we had not theoretically set up the structure with that thought in mind. The question of who it should be automatically rises quickly when that kind of problem arises.

The only logical person, in looking back on it, and I'm sure it was the case at the time, was Ehrlichman, in the sense of his being knowledgeable and interested in domestic policy areas, first of all. Secondly, having the President's total confidence

as a senior key staff person. Thirdly, having the non-involvement: not being an advocate of any particular domestic program. He was able to come into that kind of position right. So I think right at the outset it was obvious he was the best choice. Plus the fact that his role as Counsel to the President had been created, really, artificially, to give him a job as the senior staff person, really as an Assistant to the President but with the title of Counsel, as I mentioned yesterday, to preserve his lawyer's status in his own mind, in the public image, and so forth. It's not at all surprising, I don't think, that the focus turned to Ehrlichman.

The question then became one of how to structure it, whether to set up an apparatus separately or to simply designate him in that area and let him function using the existing apparatus and try to coordinate the existing people. The thinking on that evolved over this shakedown cruise period, as the staff was being formed. Various problems arose at various times. You have the [Arthur] Burns and [Daniel P.] Moynihan conflict, which was an intended one. You had [Donald] Rumsfeld coming in with some interest and expertise in [the] domestic policy area. You had obviously all of the domestic policy Cabinet people, and that we covered yesterday. The President had already designated Ehrlichman as the person to handle all of those people, the Cabinet people, as one of his assignments. So, it really just kind of developed from there.

Then, you had the question of how to structure it, and the question of whether Ehrlichman wanted to take on that

responsibility. He was somewhat reluctant to do it. John was pretty careful about getting tagged with an assignment that he wasn't sure how to execute and wasn't sure he had the backup facilities to execute properly. We got into the question of setting up a separate secretariat like the NSC [National Security Council] secretariat. We already had the White House staff secretariat who covered, theoretically, everything across the board. The NSC had it's own secretariat doing basically the same kind of things with the foreign policy thing. Then, we ended up putting a domestic policy secretariat together also, and that involved a number of personnel changes, the key one being Ken Cole. [He] was a fellow I had brought in (another former J. Walter Thompson guy; we put a bunch of them in there), who was extremely able and who was working as.... I think he was the original Staff Secretary, and I think that Ehrlichman co-opted him, saying how if he was going to take on the domestic thing that Cole had to come with him and do it, which I was very reluctant to have happen, but we evolved a replacement in the Staff Secretary position, and Cole, as I recall, did move over to the Domestic Council [and] worked with John on that. So, like all of these things, it was a day-by-day evolution.

If you go through my journal notes during that first-year period, there are apparently conflicting things at times. We're worried about dissension at one point; we're worried about one kind of argument on another; we're questioning whether Ehrlichman should take these things on; what's Rumsfeld's assignment supposed to be, within that; how do we keep Moynihan on a

productive track. It was a thing that I eased into because I didn't have a clear view in my own mind, structurally and on a people basis, as to how it should end up. So, I was trying.... I didn't want to just jump into doing something; I wanted to let it evolve and be sure we were shaking all of the pieces into the right slots. I think over time we did.

Then there was a question of how to structure my staff to back up and shift my role around, which was also evolving, kind of at the same time. The President was saying I didn't have enough time to look over PR [public relations] things, ride herd on political, ride herd on personnel, and handle all the other just day to day chores vis-a-vis his needs. So, we worked our way through. I see from my journal that we got down to about July when Ehrlichman had decided he would take the role over, and my feeling that that was the right thing to do. Then we got the President convinced that it was, and then had to continually keep Ehrlichman convinced that it was. That lasted through July and August. I think somewhere along the line, the August/September period, we put a lot of these changes into effect.

RHG: The first entry that I see where you're talking about the need for a domestic czar, as it's called here, and then Ehrlichman indicated as being the person, is March 5,...

HRH: Right.

RHG: ...1969. Then the President accepts the idea July 12, so it was quite a while in developing.

HRH: Yeah, yeah.

RHG: There're some notes on here about Ehrlichman ignoring the staff

system completely and "going his merry way", I remember one entry. Let's see if I can find that one.

HRH: April 11th. "Ehrlichman overlapping confusion problem persists as John goes on his merry way, ignoring the staff system completely. But it'll all work out as he sees his need for the system."

RHG: Was he inclined...?

HRH: It was John working his way into what he was doing. Part of the problem, at that point, was that his role and perogatives and responsibilities weren't clear. He was feeling his way into what those were in the process of doing all this. The others had a more clear definition of what their specific fields of responsibility were, and John didn't at that point.

RHG: When you say he went outside the staff system, was he just inclined to...? Not to walk into the Oval Office, that wasn't what he was doing, was it?

HRH: I don't.... Well, it may have been, and there was no problem with that. You say "walking in the Oval Office." Nobody just walked in the Oval Office, or rarely did anybody. The President would call people in, or people would go in with other people in conjunction with meetings, or we'd set up reasons for them to go in. It was more within the staff itself. John trying, not sure what his role was within the staff. A number of the junior staff people or middle-level staff people that we had brought in were, in effect, John's troops. They were guys that had worked for John in the campaign. All of them were trying to....

We set up purposely at the beginning not a lot of clearly

defined responsibilities. We set up people in general areas of responsibility. I had the four guys they called the "Cub Scouts" or something--no, the "Beaver Patrol," they called them. [They] were four guys that didn't have any assignment at all. They were staff assistants and were there as super-gofers in effect. I mean guys that were on tap to do whatever needed to be done at any given moment. They were Steve Bull and Larry Higby and John Brown and I guess maybe Bruce Kehrli. I'm not sure who the fourth one was. I remember there were four of them. Ultimately I moved Higby in with me; Brown moved into the Staff Secretary role. So they both.... Oh, it was Jay Wilkinson, Bud [Charles] Wilkinson's son who was the fourth one.

RHG: Does the name indicate they're busy beavers that were just kind of...?

HRH: Yeah.

RHG: What were they like, white blood corpuscles going around and attacking....?

HRH: No, not really. They were sort of shock troops that were.... They all four shared an office upstairs in the West Wing, and they were task men. When something needed to be done, you'd call up there and whoever was available you'd send out to do it. Basically what it was, it was stockpiling a little pool of trained administrative talent that we could use as needs came up. We could put them into assignments. The concept was that they would ultimately be assigned, but they'd start out on this general basis. Actually at the top level we did the same thing: the concept was that we were the assistants to the President with

no specific portfolio--although some obvious areas of expertise between [Bryce] Harlow and Moynihan and some of the rest. You fall into your logical niches or the needed niches, and that's what happened.

RHG: The fourth of the major White House aides in this early period was Bryce Harlow. He was the head of the Congressional Relations Office, if that's the right title. A related aide was Herbert Klein, in charge of White House communications. These men both presented a difficulty in this early period for the White House. Can you describe that?

HRH: Well, in totally different ways. I wouldn't put them in a package, because their positions and status and everything else was totally different. Harlow had long experience in Washington. He served in the [Dwight] Eisenhower administration. He'd served in political campaigns with Eisenhower and with Nixon. He went way back with both of them. He had been the Washington representative for Proctor and Gamble in the years when he wasn't in the government or in a campaign. Knew his way around the Hill. He was a super Congressional lobbyist, and a very astute political and governmental observer. A guy that had strong respect of the President--who had worked with him over the Eisenhower years and intervening years. So Bryce was an obvious one to bring in. He was the knowledgeable Washingtonian amongst the new White House staff. The rest of us.... Well, Arthur Burns had some knowledge, but at a more theoretical level. Bryce knew the game at all levels. We looked at him as sort of our mentor in.... Whenever you couldn't figure out how something

gets done in Washington or just wanted to review strategy or something, Bryce would be the guy you'd turn to. So he was sort of a senior mentor to the junior group of us who were all new in Washington.

I went into, in the first round that we did on this oral history, the question of whether White House staff people needed to be knowledgeable political, governmental and/or Washington people. I said I think they do when the President isn't, and they don't need to be necessarily so much when the President is knowledgeable himself. In other words, [Ronald] Reagan not being knowledgeable should have had had a more knowledgeable Washingtonian staff. Nixon being totally Washington knowledgeable didn't need that, because he knew himself a lot of those things. But we did need a lot of help in that regard. Bill [Willioam] Hopkins provided it at the functional level within the White House and Harlow in the levels outside the White House within the Washington culture.

Bryce was not a problem in any general sense. He was an extremely cooperative, extremely helpful guy. He was quite properly very willing to express his disagreements with things that were being done or the way things were being done when he felt that they could have been better. And always in a positive way, with a thing to come up with. The problem with Harlow was that he was acutely over-sensitive, in the President's view (and I shared it) to the whims and needs, so-called, of Congress. He was very definitely a representative of Congress to the White House, and properly so. Because we needed that. We were by the

same token, acutely insensitive to the whims and needs of Congress, and, given the fact that we were totally dependent on Congress for a lot of things, that sensitivity was important.

The problem was that Bryce--and it shouldn't be over-emphasized, but what has been referred to in my notes on specific days as "a problem with Bryce Harlow" was a problem where Bryce over-dramatized crises. Some Congressman was a little annoyed about something, and Bryce would say, "We're in real trouble on the Hill,, and we've got to be doing something about this." It was a crying-wolf sort of thing, to a degree, that annoyed the President, and consequently he didn't want Bryce coming in, [and] getting into that all of the time. Also, it took Bryce a while to shake into our staff system. He had been used to the Eisenhower staff system which had some similarities to ours, (or ours had some similarities to it) but there were very substantial differences. Of course, Nixon was very different as a President than Eisenhower was, and I was very different as a senior staff person than Sherman Adams was. Bryce felt a lot of times that I should be taking a stronger substantive position as Sherman Adams had done, because he was drawing on his Sherman Adams experience. Those were all things that were just shakedown things. They were not problems in the way that Kissinger's tantrums later became problems at times, or the Kissinger-[William] Rogers relationship was a problem. They were just things that had to be worked out as we went along.

Now, Klein was a totally different situation. Klein had....

[Interruption]

We were talking about Herb Klein. Herb went way back in relationship with Nixon. He was a newspaperman from California who had worked in Nixon campaigns going way back to the early days. I don't know if he started in the Congressional campaign or the Senatorial campaign. But he had been around the Nixon political camp for a long time, had been Nixon's press secretary or chief press officer in most of the campaigns. In the intervening periods, [he] had gone back to work at the San Diego Union, ultimately becoming editor of that paper. There is a similarity between Klein and Harlow, come to think of it, which is that, as Harlow was a very strong advocate for and mentor in the areas of Congressional relations, Herb was in the areas of press relations. He was very much a representor of the media's interests, too much so to suit Nixon's temperament and approach to the Presidency.

The Klein problem at the outset was how properly to use Herb, because Nixon had decided long ago that Herb would not be the Presidential Press Secretary, which is what Herb had expected he would be. He had worked with Nixon who was Vice President when James Hagerty was working with Eisenhower as President, and Herb, I'm sure, envisioned himself moving into very much a Jim Hagerty role in the Nixon Presidency. That was not to be, and it was a little difficult because it was a very close personal relationship and a lot of long-time dedication there to having to work that out. Nixon did not want a Press Secretary who was going to speak as the President, rather than just saying what the President told him to say. Also, he didn't want one who was as

dedicated, as he perceived Herb to be, to the needs and desires of the press. As sympathetic to the press, as much of an advocate for the press. Consequently he lit on Ron [Ronald] Ziegler as press secretary. Ron being one of my troops from J. Walter Thompson Company. [He] had worked in the California campaign in '62 (as did Dwight Chapin) and then came on as a campaign worker in the Presidential campaign and then was made Press Secretary at the White House.

Actually, I don't think at the outset we were even going to call him Press Secretary. It was going to be Briefing Officer, or something like that. Nixon's view of the Press Secretary was briefing officer. He was to provide the data that the press needed on a daily basis; to handle the mechanics of the press information office. He was not to express his opinions or analysis or predictions or anything else. It was simply to say what the President told him to say. I think there's a very good argument, incidentally, to be made for that being a proper role of a Press Secretary. Because, [although] a lot of the press don't agree with this, I think if they think about it, they might agree that they're better served if they're getting nothing but a parrot repeating what the President says. The President can't go out and brief the press every day, on a regular basis. He can take time, and his Press Secretary can take time, during the day to stay totally current with what's going on, and then report that to the press. I think that's a good service to the press as contrasted to a sort of in-house commentator who takes upon himself interpretation and elucidation and amplification, rather

than simply reportage.

That was the way Ron's role was envisioned and was basically executed. Ron was very good at that. Ron came under criticism as a being person of not great political depth and acumen. He didn't need to be. What he needed to be was a person of great accuracy in reporting what he was told to report. Which he did.

Herb, on the other hand, would not have been comfortable in that role. Herb was not as dynamic, nor nearly as upbeat and enthusiastic and all that. He's a very low-key, very soft-spoken, very nice guy. And he's a shmoozer. He likes to keep people happy: Pat 'em on the back and help 'em along. As a Harlow does with the Congress. So, the two were quite comparable in that sense.

There was a problem in deciding what Herb Klein's role would be in the new administration. We evolved the concept (I don't know whose idea it was) of a post called Director of Communications, whose job would be to oversee the communications apparatus for all segments, and coordinate for all segments of the executive branch: The Departments and agencies, and the press officers of all those. To coordinate, to keep them properly inter-posted on what's going on, so that you didn't have one agency saying one thing and another agency saying something different. So that everybody knew what the current desires were, and that sort of thing. That was what was perceived as Herb's role. He wanted to make it a more senior thing, which was the interpreter of things, and the President saw him as having some responsibility in that line as long as he wasn't doing it as

spokesman for the President but rather was a facilitator for the information offices of all the executive branch segments.

The specific point that probably raised this whole thing was a journal entry I had saying, "The President feels Klein and Harlow are the main weak points administratively." It's important to say "administratively" there, because neither Klein nor Harlow was an administrator. Both of them were personal operators. Herb Klein was very good at moving around within the press corps and talking to people, passing the line, giving them background data, all that stuff. He was not good at setting up a structure to get that done throughout the executive branch, which is what his new post required him to do. So that was the weak point thing there.

Harlow had the same responsibility, because he was supposed to oversee Congressional relations activities, Congressional liaison activities, within all the Departments and agencies of the executive branch, as well as the White House. And to be sure they were all coordinated. So that we were, as with the press, maintaining a united front, that we also would maintain a united front with Congress. And, again, Harlow was not an administrator. Harlow was an individual operative, and he was weak administratively. That's what the President is talking about here, and saying, "We can't tolerate inadequate performance. Both of them have real plusses, but they get bogged down in trivia." Which both of them did. They'd sit for an hour, Bryce would sit for an hour, going through some trivial thing with a Congressman, Herb with a journalist. Where they

should be moving around, getting things done, and having other people do that time spending. They needed a cadre of people within the Departments and at the White House to carry their things out.

So that was the thing we had to deal with that the President was raising in April. I agree with his perception: that was a problem and did need to be dealt with, and we dealt with it by trying to bring back-up people into them. Can't claim a lot of credit for doing it but we, for instance, brought Jeb Magruder in under Klein's operation as a much more activist and administrative type guy with a good PR and press relations sense. He was good in those areas, in a lot of ways. In Harlow's case we brought in Bill [William] Timmons, a very skillful Congressional relations person, who's been enormously successful since. And Lamar Alexander, who later became Governor of Tennessee and is now mentioned as a Vice Presidential and even a Presidential candidate, which is sort of fascinating. He was an administrative aide to Bryce Harlow in the Congressional Relations Office in the White House. We tried to structure good people in under these people and staff them up so that they would be able to do these administrative things, as well as take the substantive leadership roles that they were supposed to take in their areas. It worked reasonably well.

There was always a conflict between Klein and Ziegler, because Ziegler had been an aide to Klein in the campaign. Klein was nominally the Press Secretary in the campaign. It was a tough pill for Herb to swallow, to be.... We tried to create

Director of Communications as a superior post, but the world sees the Presidential Press Secretary as a pretty senior person. As a part of the policy-making apparatus in the White House, as Hagerty was, and as Pierre Salinger was, and a lot of other Press Secretaries: George Christian, some of the others, where Ziegler was not. Ziegler sat in [on] policy-making things so he would understand, but he was not a part of the input on those things.

RHG: Now, that of course is a significant change from what had happened in the prior three administrations, presumably. You mentioned Lyndon Johnson's press secretary, I think,...

HRH: George Christian, yeah.

RHG: ...and Eisenhower's. So Nixon had decided upon really a significant change in that office.

HRH: That's correct.

RHG: Do you know what was behind it?

HRH: The experience with Hagerty. He did not want someone who.... Hagerty, Nixon felt (I guess rightly so; I wasn't there, so I don't know), but Hagerty, Nixon felt, presumed to speak for the President beyond the specifics of what the President had told him to say. I think he was supposed to; I think the President expected him to. I was interested in reading in the newspaper this morning, here we are in April of 1988, Larry Speakes--the Reagan White House spokesman, who has now left the White House--his book is just out. In his book, he informs the world, to the great astonishment of the press, that a number of the memorable quotes that he gave the press from President Reagan were things that President Reagan had never said at all but that Speakes had

had someone write up and then came out and said. "The President said, when he was meeting with [Mikhail] Gorbachev that 'We seek peace positively'", and these nice phrases were not Reagan phrases at all. And Speakes is defending his doing of that, in that he says he knew how Reagan thought well enough that he knew that what he was saying was what Reagan thought, even though Reagan hadn't said it. But he presented it to the press as being Reagan quotes. Apparently, Chris [Christopher] Wallace, the network guy on NBC, was taken in by these and expressed himself as being so, because he had assumed that, when a press secretary says a President said this, it was something that literally the President had said. In fact, it turns out some of these things weren't.

Ziegler's thing was not to do that. I think Hagerty did what Speakes did. I think he put into words what he knew the President thought, where Ziegler used the words the President gave him. There was a significant difference there. Nixon was less willing to release control or authority to someone else to speak for him than some of the other Presidents I've met.

RHG: There's one here; you've already spoken to this. August 4, 1969, just contrasting Moynihan and Klein. "Moynihan generally enthusiastic.... Pat is great because he provides the upbeat shot in the arm that the rest of the staff lacks." Then you talk about Klein (he came in at this point, I guess), "And is the exact opposite of Moynihan. No juice at all."

HRH: Um hmm. And that's right. Moynihan was vibrant and buoyant, and that's what the President wanted. He wanted this enthusiasm

expressed and reflected, and I think that's very good strategy. Herb was always very low key and calm and never got excited about anything, and that bothered the President, too.

RHG: There are a couple of other, less well-known staff I'd like to ask about that what their place was. One of the most mysterious of the staff to be is Clark Mollenhoff. What did he do?

HRH: [Laughter] He was mysterious to me, too. That was a strange one. That was a whim of the President's. I don't know how Mollenhoff talked him into it. Mollenhoff was a journalist from the mid....

RHG: Des Moines I think.

HRH: Des Moines Register, I guess. Highly respected as sort of a, I think more than just a reporter. I think he was a columnist or analyst to some degree, a commentator. He had known the President over the years, and there was some rapport there. I'm not sure how it came about, but my recollection generally is that either somebody (and I suspect it was Clark himself) persuaded the President that he needed an ombudsman. That people didn't feel that they could get their views in and obviously the President couldn't receive everybody's views, but that somebody trained and skilled and dedicated, as Mollenhoff claimed he was, would be an ideal person for that. So the President bought the concept.

Actually, Bud Wilkinson had been given something of that assignment in the early days in the White House, but at a different level, really. He was more with the business and civic leadership world outside the government; Mollenhoff's was more

with the journalistic world, I think, to some degree and [with] the associations and interest groups and that kind of thing. I never did exactly figure out what Mollenhoff was up to. He was an investigative reporter, also, in a sense. I think one of the things he viewed himself as was unrooting evil within the bowels of government, and that sort of stuff, so.... He was sort of a loose cannon special operative for a while. I don't remember when he came or when he left, exactly. He was sort of just over there at the side and at the President's directive. He was put on because the President wanted him put on.

We ran into a number of people of that kind. We've sort of been reciting some of them. People that had ties to Nixon that Nixon felt should be useful. He had an old friend Roger [Johnson]--can't remember his last name--from out here in California that he had us put on as a person just to talk to people who wanted to come and talk to people. Sort of the ombudsman thing again. Because the President was sensitive to the isolation question, and people feeling that there was nobody they could get through to at the White House. So we were trying to provide some people to whom you could get through. I wasn't about to take on that role myself, nor were Ehrlichman and Harlow and Kissinger and people like that, so we set up these other people to do it.

It didn't work very well because the problem was, once those people got all this input from outside, there was no place for them to put it inside. That became obvious to the people outside, that they were talking to an empty well: they were

filling [it] up, but the water wasn't going anywhere. It was, I think, a well-meaning but pretty much futile exercise.

RHG: It sounds like in concept the Mollenhoff assignment and even, from the way you describe it, the Wilkinson assignment, were related to what eventually became [Charles] Colson's assignment.

HRH: True, but Colson in a much different way. Colson, to the extent that there were positives to Colson--and there were, a lot. It was a doable assignment: Colson had the President's ear, and Colson was set up not.... The others were set up as sponges to absorb without passing on. Nobody really wanted it passed on. The stuff that they were getting nobody wanted. Colson they did, because Colson--it was more our initiative. We were going out and trying to find out what interest groups wanted. We wanted them to have a voice. We wanted to be responsive to them. The other was to listen to people that wanted, and felt they were entitled, to be heard, but [they] didn't really have anything valuable to put in, from the internal perspective.

One was a hand-holding thing; the other was an initiative on our part to encourage participation, and also then to turn around and follow-up: to get the input from these people, to try to get action on behalf of that input, and then be sure we got credit with those people for having done it, politically and in terms of support. One was a passive program of absorbing; the other was an active program of extending.

RHG: Just before I leave Mollenhoff, the entries here that I found sounded very.... Here's one: "Just listened to Clark's tales of horror re his investigations." Then there's something else about

his looking at tax returns, I think. What was he doing? Just, as you mentioned, trying to be an investigative reporter in the government?

HRH: I think so. I think that was one of his assignments. Maybe I'm wrong. I think maybe his ombudsman thing was not just to hear people but to hear people who had specific complaints about things that were being done wrong, and then to probe.... I think he felt he had the license within. It was sort of an investigative reporter's dream: with the authority of the President [to] look into these alleged wrongdoings and get something done about them. Expose them internally, and get them corrected. Whether they were abuses of power or mistreatment of people externally, or whatever it might be. I think that's right. He was supposed to follow up on those things, but again it was a negative thing rather than....

Colson's was positive. Colson's was: what needs to be done, and let's get it done. Mollenhoff's was: what's being done wrong that we need to correct. I think that he saw it in terms of.... Well, he had access to income tax returns and stuff like that. He could track stuff down. He assumed some things. I remember more now. The problem, I think, that I had with Mollenhoff was that he assumed--very rapidly--as much authority as he could possibly bring upon himself and then exercise within the government. I think, from his external efforts as an investigative reporter on the outside, he realized that there were lots of channels that, if you could only get to [them], you'd find out lots of things. Here, lo and behold, he had

gotten the "open sesame" passkey to all these channels. He was running rapidly through all possible channels. He was upsetting a lot of people in the process, because Clark is a guy with an aggressive, and, to a degree, abrasive, personality, and consequently created.... He trampled people as he went along, and we'd get repercussions from that. Unfortunately, I can't remember any specifics, and I don't know if there's anything in the journals...

RHG: No, not that I recall.

HRH: ...on specifics. Probably not, because they generally weren't important enough matters to focus a lot of attention on. The important thing was the damage, in effect, that he was doing in his overly zealous efforts to bring right and virtue into every aspect of government.

RHG: Did you and the President try to stop him from doing this?

HRH: I know I did. I don't think the President did very much. It was the President's idea to bring him to do all this, or the President's orders to do it; I think maybe it was Clark's idea. But I'm not sure I had a lot of sympathy from the President on my concerns. I don't that I took many of them to the President.

RHG: What about Bud Wilkinson? His career, from what I can gather, seems a very sad one.

HRH: A very what?

RHG: A sad one.

HRH: Sad?

RHG: In the sense that it never got started.

HRH: His career in the White House.

RHG: Right.

HRH: Well, it was because.... Here again--Bud Wilkinson [was] one of the great football coaches of all time, an absolutely marvelous man, wonderful guy. The President had an extremely high personal regard for Bud Wilkinson, and a feeling that a guy with this talent, ability, niceness, and integrity and all those good things--I mean, he was as totally Boy Scout and apple pie and All-American as you could possibly hope anybody to be. Good-looking, charming, personable, everything. The President felt: "A guy like that has got to be an enormous asset. Let's use it." We could never figure out, between us and Bud, the way to use it.

Part of it was that he was too nice a guy. It was hard for him to take the aggressive positions that the President was insisting that everybody take on things. It was impossible for him not to be sympathetic to anybody who had some concern or problem, or complaint, or whatever. We tried different things, different roles, for Bud and none of them really worked out well. In every case he seemed to be miscast. It was no positive problem; it was just the negative problem of not being able to find the right way to utilize what really should have been a great asset. We never did find the right way. He was there for awhile and then left.

He had run for Senate in Oklahoma--Senator or Governor or something. He had run for some political office in Oklahoma and had lost. [He] had an interest in politics and government and an interest in Nixon, and, of course, a great name throughout the country. Was an American hero-type fellow, like Frank Borman was

in a different way. We should have been able to find something. We didn't, and that's probably our fault. Because, looking back on it, we needed nice guys. We needed some people to soften the hard image and the hard fact of the way we were doing business because of the problems we had to deal with: the war, and all the other things that needed to be handled.

One of the things the President was very strong on trying to develop was the sense of volunteerism. There's an enormous desire within this country on the part of millions of people to volunteer their services to be helpful in something worthwhile. Lots of Presidents and First Ladies have concerned themselves in various ways with volunteerism, trying to tap that latent source of energy and accomplishment and channel it to the most productive uses. A lot of volunteers waste their time in things that are not productive just because they can't find something that is. Bud was, at one point at least, seen as the potential for the figurehead for starting up and leading the concept of developing volunteerism. He was also seen as liaison potential with other people, and he was also seen....

One of the needs that the President had on a personal basis --and I think this is true of lots of leaders, not just political, business and civic and otherwise--was a need for a personal friend that was regarded by him as a peer, basically, not as a subordinate. And in whom he had total trust and confidence, and to whom he could confide his fears and his worries and his joys and things that leaders don't feel they can confide or disclose to their subordinates because if you tell a

subordinate you're very worried about something, then you're channelling that worry down through the organization, which you don't want to do. But sometimes it's hard to carry all that load yourself. I've seen that in working with business leaders and educational leaders as well, in addition to the political. At one point Bud was seen as the official Presidential friend. That didn't work out either, because Bud was too low-key and soft, sort of Herb Klein-like in a way. Just a real nice guy.

[End side one]

[Begin side two]

HRH: And I think I've pretty well wrapped that up. That was the role and the attempts at roles, and they were basically pretty unsuccessful. And it was not Bud's fault, it was ours.

RHG: Looking back, I have a feeling, just from your description, that something the administration could have profited from in its relationship with the country as a whole was a shmooze unit. (You use that word.) The people who were the best potential shmoozers, none of them quite worked out right. One by one they drifted away or drifted away from the center of responsibility, and you never had a shmooze unit like that.

HRH: That's right, and it's too bad, because we recognized, at least intellectually, the need for a shmooze unit. And emotionally, gut-wise, we knew we needed that. But none of us in the control positions was a shmoozer himself. Well, Ehrlichman was, to a degree. And Harlow certainly was, and Harlow certainly was in a semi-control position, but in a sense one step removed. The real problem was the President, while recognizing the need for

shmoozing, wanted it to be done by someone else. He didn't want to have to get the input from it. The problem with the shmoozing is you can't shmooze it all by yourself. You've got to do something with the concerns that people have and the interests that people have in order for it to be meaningful, which is what Colson did do, because we were taking the initiative, but Colson wasn't shmoozing. Colson was aggressively trying to find out, "What do you want? What can we do to help you?" That's different than being available to hear what you're concerned about. It was a failing. I don't know how we could have or should have remedied it, but I'm sure you're right that we should have. We would have benefited had we figured out and carried out that kind of thing in a good way. It would have very definitely been to our benefit and might have been enormously helpful when things hit the fan [at] the end of the first term, start of the second.

RHG: I want to ask just one or two questions about Colson, keeping most of the questions about him for later. I think he came on to the staff in the summer of 1969.

HRH: Was it that early?

RHG: My recollection might not be correct, but I think that's right. Summer, or possibly the fall, but I think in the latter part of this shakedown period we're talking about.

HRH: OK.

RHG: I wanted to ask, first of all, how did the concept of the need for his office grow?

HRH: His office evolved. Now, I'm not sure exactly what his mission

was to begin with. I'm sure it wasn't exactly the same as it evolved into, and I can't even remember whether it was even approximately the same. The source of Colson, as I recall, was Bryce Harlow. Bryce had known him through his Washington--Colson was a Washington lawyer--and Bryce had known him through his life in Washington in some way, and I'm not sure in exactly what context. Colson had worked for...

RHG: [Leverett] Saltonstall.

HRH: ...Saltonstall. So that's it. So that's how Bryce knew him; he knew him as an aide to the Senator and had seen him as a knowledgeable, able guy and had recommended his coming on. I'm not exactly sure in what role, whether it was in relation to Congressional things, or whether it was that he felt that we needed to be more sensitive to the lobbyists and interest groups and associations and organizations, and all that, and that Colson would be an ideal guy to do that. I'm not exactly sure.

RHG: Presumably then Harlow sold the concept to Nixon.

HRH: Harlow sold Colson to Nixon, or to me. No, I think it was to Nixon, probably. I think the concept must have been there, and Colson was perceived as a good guy to deal with it, but I may be wrong. I don't know. I don't have a clear fix on that.

RHG: We're going to talk for awhile about public relations in the Nixon White House. My experience in going through this journal has made me feel that this is both a very important part of the White House operation and an even more important part of your position in the White House, and one that is not very well understood. At least I can say definitely I didn't understand it

too well. I mentioned yesterday that the more I read and heard of this, the more I came to feel that public relations was, first of all, misnamed. You mentioned that Nixon just used the term PR rather loosely to cover a lot of only partly-related things and that it was an essential part of the President's office in the sense that it enabled a proper functioning of what Nixon was calling PR; it enabled the President to lead. Can you just begin by describing what PR meant to Nixon?

HRH: It's tough, because it's a broad subject and I think we're going to have to work at it to develop a rational statement that sums it up in some cogent way. The basic concept starts with the fact that, in a democracy, a President--a leader--has to have a substantial segment of public opinion moving with him on the major issues that he's dealing with. In order to govern effectively, in order to maintain a mandate or a position of influence over the Congress and the other people on whom the President is dependent in order to get his programs and initiatives carried out, there's got to be public support. There's got to be perceived public support for what the President's doing or trying to do. The necessity for maintaining that level of public support requires that [a] substantial segment of the public knows and understands and favorably evaluates what the President is doing or trying to do, and why he's doing it or trying to do it.

That then translates in Nixon's case specifically--what I've just said was really general to all Presidents--to the somewhat unique Nixon problems, both real and imaginary, I suppose, in

dealing with public opinion and with the press. The means by which the public--and when I'm saying the public here I guess I mean all publics: the regular run of population, plus the leadership segments, plus the Congressional segments, the academic segments, the journalistic segments, all these different factors. All of these [publics] get their current information about a President through journalists, or through the media, let's say, and to some degree, with one or two media (TV and radio), sometimes directly from the President and his immediate cohorts and coworkers within the executive branch of the government. They get the rest of it interpreted to them or reported to them by journalists or commentators, analyzed by commentators, analyzed by opinion leaders, editorial writers, Congressmen and Senators, and so forth. All of these groups have to be informed accurately in order to come up with accurate, proper conclusions. So the first problem is accurate information.

The second problem is favorable interpretation, at least a statement of expression of the viewpoint of a particular President or a particular administration in terms of the reasons why they're doing what they're doing, and the results that they hope to achieve from that, and an understanding of why those results are or should be desirable to each individual segment or person within the totality of the public. OK. The Nixon problem in this regard, as he perceived it, was an essentially not-friendly or at least certainly not an actively supportive media corps in general. And also Congress in general, because he did

not have majority support in the Congress, and he believed, and I think all media analyses that were done at the time would strongly support that he did not have majority support, ideologically and politically within the media, within the people that work in the media. He had fairly strong support in many publishers offices of newspapers and perhaps in management positions within the networks, and all, but not at the working journalist (reporter and commentator and analyst and editorial writer) levels.

So, he perceived a need to take aggressive and continuous strong steps to keep his side of the story before the public in order to counteract, or at least balance, what he saw as being the other side of the story that was effectively getting through to the public on a constant basis. That required programs of strong positive action on our part--by "our" I mean the administration, the President and all of his people. It required strong reactive abilities to counteract or deal with criticisms and misinformed or misinterpreted reportage or analysis. And it required, in his view, an attack program, an offensive as well as a defensive posture, that was overtly discrediting the people that were trying to discredit the administration so as to not let their views be presumed to be the correct ones vis-a-vis the opposing views of the administration.

That led Nixon to spending an enormous amount of thought and time and effort--because he had instinctively felt the necessity for doing this--in dealing with these kinds of issues, of procedures. Of how to get our story out in the best possible

form and most understandable and most acceptable and most compelling form. How to counteract opposition stories that were getting out. How to deal with the problems of not being able to get the story across, and that sort of thing. That was all lumped under what unfortunately becomes titled (and in Nixon's own terminology) public relations.

It isn't really public relations in the normal corporate sense of public relations and press releases, and that sort of thing. It's the dealing with the whole issue of public opinion and recognizing that public opinion is formed by what the public is told, and the public is told what the media tells it. So that's the underlying premise on which we were constantly dealing with these things. Unfortunately, in our words, as we go through like what I've written in the journal and what will be heard on White House tapes and seen in White House memoranda and staff notes, and all that sort of thing, is dealing with this in very cold-blooded terms. Talking about "selling our story", talking about "getting our point across", talking about "attacking the bad guys", talking about "knocking down this story or that story", talking about "plugging these leaks", talking about "discrediting this source." I think it's hard not to approach the thing from that viewpoint, because that's the way it was perceived and dealt with in our terms at the time.

What I'm floundering for here is some effort to put what I believe to be the proper positive tone and light on those efforts, and to say that I think it was quite proper, intelligent, necessary, appropriate, essential, really, that we

have these concerns, and that we worked in many of the ways that we did in dealing with them. I'm sure that some of the ways that we tried to deal with them, and that the President tried to deal with them, were ineffective and probably foolish. The banning of specific people from riding on Air Force One and some of the things tended to get--certainly seemed to be and, in fact, probably at times were--into the area of petty retribution and unworthy reaction, or overreaction perhaps, to negative or unfavorable reportage or analysis. Always there was the thought, in the back of the President's mind and transmitted to all of us on a very constant basis: never let down your guard; never let down the offensive; this is something that we've got to keep working at all the time. He kept prodding at it, and he kept working at it himself, and we kept trying to find ways to be more effective in all of these facets of dealing with public opinion questions.

RHG: What I sense is that Nixon began with the idea that the reality of his Presidency was a very decent kind of enterprise. I think he felt that his motives, his desires for the country, were all of a respectable and admirable kind. His programs that he was putting in place gradually were noble in their ways. His vision of the country, I think he was satisfied, was a worthwhile vision. This was the reality to him, but I think it was his view of the world [that] that reality was not shared by a great many of the people. I mean that sense of the reality that he had was not shared by many of the people on whom he had to depend to maintain his freedom of action as a leader. Is this right?

HRH: Yeah.

RHG: He had a hostile Congress, there's no question about it. At least it was with the other party. For some reason of another, and I know Nixon had some ideas about this, he felt, at least, that the press was antagonistic to him as well.

HRH: That's correct, and you're absolutely right in your point that he firmly believed--and very deeply--that his goals, his visions, his objectives, his programs, were good, were sound, were for the benefit of the country as a whole and for segments of the country in specifics. That they were all worthy and were therefore worthy of being judged on their merits. What he sought was that they be judged fairly on their merits, rather than being automatically, or with knee-jerk reaction, be negatively presented or attacked simply because they were coming from Nixon, or a Republican administration, or from the minority party in the Congress, or whatever it might be.

The contrast frequently came up, and it's been reported a lot and there's no point in denying it, which was the difference between John Kennedy and Nixon in this regard. It's quite well substantiated, again in objective analysis, that Kennedy had an almost adulation by the press, by the vast majority. Obviously, there are exceptions to all these things; you can't make total generalities. There was a high element of adulation in the press corps for President Kennedy, to the extent were he almost could do no wrong. Where the fact that he did [something], in itself, made it a great thing to do. Or that he said it made it a great thing to say. Or that he proposed legislation made it great

legislation. His accomplishments were not at all in proportion to this level of adulation, and cold analyses after the fact and with the emotions somewhat removed have tended to reveal that. But at the time there was a hero-worship level that was at least as strong, and I would suspect stronger, within the press corps and the elite of the commentators and the media as it was in the general public.

That was certainly not the case with Nixon. So it was a hurdle that he recognized he had to exert superhuman efforts to get over. He had to go beyond what a John Kennedy would or a Dwight Eisenhower would have to do in order to get the same recognition of merit for his proposals, and so forth, as those Presidents might have been able to do. Although neither of them was noted for any great legislative or program accomplishments. There was a constant push for "We've got to do twice as well." I don't know where it is in the journal here but there's a quote here somewhere which deals with a 90:10 ratio, where Nixon said at one point...

RHG: I remember that. "The press is against..."

HRH: I ought to try to find some of these things in this subject area, because they're... In July of 1969, in the first year we were still riding with our honeymoon, really, and things were at that point going well. The President made the point to me that our problem [was] to get the positive story of our proposals and legislative successes across to counterbalance the press play of the negatives. The positives were, at that point we hadn't lost a vote in Congress yet in six months in office, the first half

year in office. Everything he had proposed to Congress that had been voted on had passed. Given the fact that both houses were under the control of the opposition party, that was not a mean accomplishment. But we weren't getting much positive media coverage or public reaction to that fact. Instead, the strong press play was on negatives like civil rights guidelines, which were positive in the South but negative in other parts of the country, voting rights and things like that. The fact that our own people were unhappy because we weren't cutting government spending and welfare and because a lot of the people on the right and the "hawks" thought we were softening on our approaches on Vietnam. That was being played up rather than the positive side. Then, later in July, Newsweek carried a story on Nixon's lack of leadership. Immediately the newspapers picked up that story, and they in mid-July were loaded with this "lack of leadership" theme, which was obviously a new line that came out.

This was another perception we had that lead to the charges of paranoia about the press, and so forth. But I think it was pretty well substantiated often, and this is one example of it. Newsweek comes out in early July with a lead story on lack of leadership by the President. Immediately, within a week, a lot of the newspapers and the press theme was lack of leadership. It became a line; whether it was a planned line or not, it was de facto a line that was coming out. The President was concerned at that point that we were failing to get the story across properly of what he was accomplishing. I felt he was definitely right in feeling that. The record at that point was a lot better than we

were getting credit for, and we needed to do something about that.

When we get on to September there's concern on the President's part because of a big New York Times story saying that all [of] the initiative was coming from the Congress and none was coming from the White House. The President's reaction to that was that it shows that we're not taking the offensive as we should. We were taking a lot of initiative, but we weren't being viewed as taking a lot of initiative. That carried through as we went along into the (I'm trying to stay with the generalities here) the need for trying to plan our own activities in the proper way.

We get into January, a year into office. I had a long discussion in mid-January of 1970 with the President on the exposure and visibility question, and he felt that we were tending to pace ourselves on the basis of how our friends are reacting to our enemies. That's sort of a complex thought, but it's interesting. We were making our decisions and doing things based on what our friends reacted to what our opposition was saying. The President was concerned that he was overexposing as a result of that and that people get tired of seeing the President and that only political sophisticates argue for more Presidential visibility. The President's saying, "Maybe we need to maintain some scarcity value to get more mileage out of our appearances when we do do something publicly." That was exploration of one strategy, let's say, in trying to deal with that sort of negative stuff.

In April of that year the President was expressing concern about a lack of enthusiasm in the administration and especially in the White House staff, in that no one was taking the offensive. "Everyone just lies down and just lets everyone walk over us. We don't radiate enthusiasm, possibly because they don't really feel enthusiasm." There was a need to develop a feeling of enthusiasm and then to express that. Everyone works long and hard, but everything comes out "blah". The thought is all focused on the substance--doing the right thing the right way--but not on the form. Not on making people understand what we're doing and why we're doing it, with enthusiasm that will generate support.

RHG: I know Nixon thought that he had the best substance and process staff that any President had ever had, but nobody that could push the story out the way that he wanted it pushed out.

HRH: That's right.

RHG: I think he felt the same way about many of the Cabinet people: that many of them were very good as administrators in their Departments. It strikes me here too that the concern is just such a continuous thing, that part of what is happening is Nixon is very aware, already, from what has happened to him in public office and in running for public office, in his life, that he doesn't have what John Kennedy had. And undoubtedly at one level he was very envious of that. But at another level he was just realistic about it. And that he would have to find a very complicated substitute. And that this part of it; in fact, this was it. He had to rely on every one of you, that was around him,

to make up for this deficiency in his own political character.

HRH: That's absolutely right. The thing that we'll see as we explore some of the specifics in this whole general area of influencing public opinion and dealing with the problems of public opinion was a lashing out or a reaching out in various ways to try and develop techniques, people, processes, strategies, in order to deal with this kind of a question. A lot of that tended to focus on his perception that, at least at times--and it would go up and down as his own thinking would vary on how to deal with all of this--the general public tends to look at a President in terms of a personal perception of him as a man, rather than on the basis of what he does. Therefore, form does become very important. Presentation--it goes back to the old charisma and all that sort of thing, personal image-type stuff--becomes very important. Part of that is dependent on the fact, on what the man actually does do and the form in which he does it, but also it depends on what people say he does or thinks, and how do people around him.... People in the general public get their impressions of the man who is President, a lot of them, from the people who are working with the man who is President, and how they perceive him. It's important for the people around the President to be projecting an enthusiastic positive picture of the President at work and what he's doing, as well as selling hard on the substance of what he's doing.

The problem that we found a lot of the time was that we were selling the substance but we weren't selling the man himself. We weren't making the positive points about the man who was

responsible for the development and implementation of this substance, and that we needed a lot more of that. Nixon was looking, as we went along, about that kind of thing. I don't know that we were ever really successful in finding specific ways of doing it, but I think we can explore some of the things that we did and how they worked.

RHG: He was always.... You mentioned Nixon the man, and I think that he perceived the reality, judging from your journal, as being that programs, most of them, on their faces, would not achieve any support for him and not enhance his ability to lead, but that, if he had to go, initially, straight to the people to change the perception of some of the other policymakers in government and even of the press, he had to present a package, or develop a way of delivering the message. The package would be the simplicity of a single human being--himself, in this case--that the people would understand. People who didn't care about legislation and programs, that they would understand the reality of the Presidential character. That was one way. Another way was to package programs in a certain way. I think Nixon, of many of the Presidents, was not very successful with coming up with sellable titles, but he tried some. Ehrlichman seemed to be your main phrasemaker, as I read your journal.

HRH: We tried awful hard on coming up with titles, and it was hard to do. It was recognized that that was important. That the content of a program for welfare reform might be less important than the title of the program that was called a Family Assistance Program, or something. Then you had to worry about what the initials

spelled out, and all that sort of thing, so that's definitely true. The other thing was that you had to balance that scarcity concept we talked about. The President can't go on television every day, because the people get awfully tired of seeing him. He needs to maintain some scarcity value and maintain the level of importance when he does make direct appearances. He needs surrogates who are making those appearances for him.

How the Cabinet Secretaries present programs and their personalities and themselves on television and in other media coverage and in personal coverage, and so forth, is enormously important. How they present to the public their picture of the President is important, and John Connally was a marvelous exponent of that, as was Pat Moynihan. You had two very enthusiastic guys who were very not only willing but anxious to get out and say, "President Nixon has a fantastic approach to this thing. He is a tremendous guy who is taking the leadership in this thing, and it's amazing to me to watch the way his mind works in these meetings as we're developing these programs." And would go on and on about this, where most of the people would simply go out and plod through "Our new program is carefully designed to reduce the level of government spending while we are trying to maintain the level of family care at a proper point." Nixon's point was all of those ponderous things were vitally important and essential, because they were the essence of the program, but they were not of any great value in selling that program and presenting that program and developing support for that program amongst the media, the Congress, and the populace as

a whole. Where a guy like Moynihan going out and saying, "This is the greatest thing that anybody's come up with since [Benjamin] Disraeli invented such and such" or, "since Queen Victoria decided to do so-and-so" or, "since George Washington delivered his second message to Congress." Building these memorable phrases and these pictures of a President with great insight, with great compassion, with great concern, with great interest, with great intelligence, with great initiative. All kinds of things that you can't say about yourself. A President can't go out and say, "I'm one hell of a guy." Pat Moynihan or John Connally can go out and say, "This President is one hell of a guy. We're damn lucky to have him here." But they [the Cabinet] didn't do it.

Kennedy's people did. Kennedy's people were out gushing all the time about how marvelous Kennedy was, because saying that was fashionable and accepted. That was an "in" thing to say at those times. It was not an "in" thing to say, "Nixon's a great guy." That was sort of a, "He is???" [Laughter] If you even got that positive a response. So it was hard for people to do it. It was hard to be enthusiastic about him, and then the result was that Nixon himself tended to counteract that lack of enthusiasm by trying to push it harder, and that became awkward, because you can't push yourself. He recognized that, and he didn't want to push himself.

Whenever he did push himself, it became--or whenever he did counterattack, which is the other side: the negatives weren't played well either. When someone blasted us, nobody went out--or

rarely did someone go out--and blast the person who blasted us and say, "You're dead wrong." And do it in an enthusiastic, believable, positive, important way. Missing that was a real failing. It all came to a climax, really, in Watergate at the end, when the people in other countries of the world could not understand.... We heard this expressed time and again during that time, and I hear it expressed time and again today. People in other countries can't understand how such a great President, such a man with such vast global vision and enormous intelligence and talent, could have been so badly chopped up by [such] insignificant things as constituted Watergate. It's really interesting that the Biblical concept that a prophet is without honor in his own country was so clearly demonstrated, in a sense, there.

Yet now, many years after Nixon's left office, he re-emerges with the recognition of his expertise in lots of areas, and of the enormity of his accomplishments and the admirability of his efforts in many areas. Not just foreign policy, but certainly emphasized by, and most expressed in, foreign policy. These were things he kept pushing for all the time trying to find techniques, trying to find people, and that got us into, on the counterattack side, the whole paranoia thing. I don't think it was paranoia. I think there was a very valid, realistic recognition of the difficulty we had, as Nixon people, in getting our story across to, first of all, the opinionmakers and then to the populace at large. That is the essence of all of these public relations efforts.

Let me run through some of the things over time that we got into and the President's views towards the media, because that's that paranoica thing. Early on in the administration the President spoke with the Cabinet people and with all of us, and he constantly reiterated this thing of the need for understanding the press and understanding the people like Bob [Robert] Semple, who was the White House reporter at the New York Times during the campaign and during part of the White House, at least, [whom] we all liked, because he was a nice guy. Everybody said, "Oh, Bob Semple's a nice guy. We can deal with him." Nixon made the point that you've got to deal with him as what he is; he's a nice guy on a personal basis. So is [Alexei] Kosygin a nice guy. Nixon's comment was, "Kosygin is probably kind to his mother, but that's totally irrelevant." Because Bob Semple being a nice guy has nothing to do with what Bob Semple writes and how he interprets what we are doing, which is essentially negative almost all [of] the time. That's what we've got to deal with, and you can't deal with it on the basis that Bob Semple is a nice guy.

You have to deal with it in ways of strongly presenting our story to the Bob Semples of the world in ways that they are compelled, to some extent at least, to report it in the kinds of ways that we would want it reported. We got that done once in awhile, but not very often. The President's reaction, very frequently, to that was a very strong negative one. In December I noted that the President wanted everybody from Look, and also David Frost, blacklisted. Now, blacklisted meant they're not to

be given any special treatment. Blacklisted has all kinds of adverse connotations. This was not--it was adverse in the sense that when you help.... The tendency, on the part of our people, in dealing with a negative story in Look magazine, let's say, would be to try, when Look is going to do this story, to cooperate and get as much helpful stuff in as they can. The President's saying, when he's saying "blacklist people", he's saying....

[End of side two cassette one]

[Begin side one cassette two]

HRH: We were talking in general about this PR thing, as it's unfortunately called: the President's concerns in dealing with public opinion and how to go about it. I'd like to try and proceed in a general sense through, in something of a chronological order, but staying on the conceptual side, and then go back and talk about specific techniques and tactics and people and so forth in dealing with these things.

We were into the second year, 1970, of the Presidency. The President was talking about lack of enthusiasm in the administration and the White House staff: our not taking the offensive; not radiating enthusiasm; his concern that it's because we don't feel it. Everybody relies too much on the President for all of this, rather than getting leadership expressed from other people in putting out these positive things. A little later he was blasting, or really, concerned about our lack of an offensive in this area. Of going out and selling, with enthusiasm, the things that we were trying to do. That we

weren't using the Cabinet officers and other people to deal with these things, both on the offensive basis and on the reactive basis. By this time in April of 1970, into the second year of the Presidency, there was a lot of talk of a passive Presidency in the media and nobody was counteracting that, and that was of concern to the President. "Why are we letting that myth", let's say, "persist, and not really not taking it on?"

RHG: May I throw in a couple from the same period?

HRH: Sure.

RHG: This is February, 1970, quoting Nixon from your journal: "What an individual does is irrelevant to his ability to lead. The whole point is how he does it."

HRH: Right. What he's saying there is--that's not an absolute statement, that's a relative statement--in a sense he's saying, what he does in his leadership ability is less relevant than how he does it; it's still vitally important, but he's dealing only with the question of ability to lead. Then, you have to expand that in this public opinion discussion to his view that both what he does and how he does it is presented to the public, and thus becomes a part of developing public opinion, not just by the President, but by other people who describe how he does it. That leads to the need for activity constantly, talking about how he does it. The Kennedy people were marvelous at that. They were out gurgling all the time about how "It's just marvelous the way this guy is taking command," and all this sort of stuff. Nixon people weren't doing that; they sort of took it for granted. It wasn't an automatic thing on the part of those people, and that

was a matter of internal concern.

RHG: I was just thinking about one example of what you're saying, and that is.... I've had reason recently to look through the Commerce Department files during the time of Maurice Stans's Secretaryship, and what I see in those files is a Secretary that's working very, very hard to have a good, sound program in his Department and write memoranda for the President with a list of a dozen things that are going forward in his Department. And yet when Stans would show up in your journal, it was usually in an unfavorable light, because he was such a poor salesman. He just didn't sell. And when it came time where Nixon wanted to move Stans to the Re-election Committee, for a very understandable reason, Stans wanted to stay as Commerce Secretary, and felt he still had a job to do. Nixon wanted him out, and not only to raise money, but because he wanted somebody in [Commerce] who could sell the Department.

HRH: That's right. And that expressed itself in another conversation in April where the President was, in this instance, concerned about both Klein and Ziegler, on the basis that Ziegler is too young to be a believable salesman, and Klein is too dull to be an enthusiastic salesman. And that our two main presenters within the White House were not effective. He felt that we were losing a lot of momentum and value on SALT [Strategic Arms Limitation Talks] and postal reform and family assistance, these very positive programs, not because there was anything wrong with the programs but because of the way they were being presented, and backed up, and followed through. His real concern was a feeling

on his part--you can't argue with it--that we weren't getting across the mystique of political leadership. He felt strongly that there was a concept of the mystique of political leadership that was an intangible concept, as mystique [by] necessity is, and that some people are perceived as being great leaders and other people aren't. It isn't necessarily a result of the substance of their leadership that those perceptions arise. It's the mystery of it, the mystique of it, the charisma, the magic, the philosophy, the concept, and that sort of thing.

A month after that he was giving me another lecture on the same subject in which he said he thinks he was wrong in his original concept that we needed to build mystique and build Presidential image and build Nixon image. The reason he decided he was wrong is that he realized in his current level of thinking at that point, it's impossible to do that when the press is against you. You have to do it through the medium of the media, and when you're strained through that medium, what comes out is only what the strainer lets come out. The strainer doesn't let this mystique come out because they're not sympatico to that thing.

So, what he was saying in May was that we should give up the struggle to try and do this, to sell this mystique and to present from other people. Just put the President on television as frequently as we could and as effectively as we could, and let him present his story directly to the people on the television medium. We did an enormous [amount] of that, and it was done very effectively. The mythology today seems to be that Nixon was not good on television. The fact of the matter is that Nixon as

President was very good on television, in terms of the effectiveness of his carrying his own case to the people.

Certainly one of the most notable evidences of that was back in November of the first year, November of 1969, in the [anti-Vietnam War] moratorium thing, when Nixon went on TV, made his case, called for a "Silent American Majority" to rise up and be heard. Because we did know, from mail and polls and everything else, that there was an enormous amount of public support out in the country for what the President was trying to do, but it was a silent support, where the small minority of violently opposed people were marching on Washington and tearing down college campuses. Doing things that got all kinds of huge coverage and made it appear that the country as a whole was opposed to the President, and didn't feel that what he was doing was good. I remember he called me on the phone late at night on November 4th --that moratorium period--and he was sort of thoughtful and wistful in the telephone conversation that night. He said, "You know, Bob, there probably has never been a day like this in our administration." Here was the press last week reporting that we're in the dumps; there is no leadership, and everything's floundering along. And he says, "Now look at things." The turnaround. The "Silent Majority" concept. The public response and all. They've had to report that. It was something that couldn't be ignored. Just like the demonstrations couldn't be ignored (the "anti-" stuff). It really has taken effect. Every time he'd start a conversation, he'd say, "You know, it's been quite a day." It really had been quite a day. That was one of

the rare sort of upswings in this whole opinion arena over the first term.

Only a few months later, in the following May, when things were sagging again, he was back to saying, "We can't really get this mystique thing across, and we shouldn't even try. Because Nixon's never going to have a good public image. So give it up." I didn't agree with him. I thought he was partly right in terms of the difficulty of getting across a good public image, but I strongly felt that we should keep on trying to do it. That anything we did would be some improvement and would move us forward. My feeling was--my reaction to his concerns and analysis, both ups and downs on it--that he ought to quit worrying about it himself, and be President, which he was so good at. Let us worry about these kinds of things. The problem there was that he didn't feel anybody really was worrying about it, because he didn't see any results. Therefore he felt he had to worry about it.

One of my major tasks as chief of staff with Richard Nixon was to deal with what his perceptions of what his staff and Cabinet and allies were doing. To constantly, first of all, have them doing the things that he wanted them doing. Then, have him perceive that they were doing it, so that he wouldn't worry about it. Because his inclination was, when he did his testing, if he found out that things were going the way he wanted them to go, then he'd lay back and let people take care of things. As soon as he runs this little testing and finds that things aren't going properly, then he feels he has to step in himself, take

personal command and get it done. That diverts him from the essence of the Presidency and from the presentation of this public image and development of public opinion that he's trying to do. At that stage, in May of '70, at least, Nixon's inclination was to go to the aloofness thing. Then the personal presentations on television, and trying to build the mystique, or whatever it might be, by that route.

But that changed over time, and as we got into November of '70, almost two years into office. In talking about the press Nixon shows some of that what has been termed paranoia. He was making a major point to me that, in general, the press people suffer from a high level of excessive intellectual pride. That they themselves are totally self-centered, and hence they can't admit that they're wrong, and they can't tolerate being proven wrong. So whenever we do do something good, do have a good story, what that's doing is throwing a challenge, throwing a glove in the face of the press guy who has been reporting that we've been doing things wrong. Now they're being proven wrong; we're doing something right. And they don't like it. Thus they react with a dislike for Nixon, who's proven them wrong so often. He had the feeling, also, that there wasn't a lot of integrity within the press corps, and that there was not much religious quality. They were less emotional and more intellectually arrogant, and therefore it was hard to get these personal, conceptual mystique-type things through to them and through them, to the people.

RHG: Was this view of the press one that Nixon always held?

HRH: Yes. This was not a varying view. This is an exposition of a continuing view and it was refined and modified in ways, [in] different reactions at different times. It extended to academia to a great extent, too, that there was also this intellectual pride there. That then would expand to the Eastern Establishment and the intelligentsia, and all that sort of thing that was an elitism there. An intellectual elitism that, because they didn't perceive Nixon as one of themselves, had trouble seeing the good in Nixon. That made it necessary to force them, in effect, to see the good, but in the process of forcing them to see the good, you were forcing them to admit they were wrong in having not seen it, or in having seen the bad, and that that was a difficult thing for an intellectual to have to cope with. He even came up with the remark that the intellectuals of the left are actually a new group of fascists. In a reverse twist, the left-wing intellectualism was really a form of fascism. That's an interesting concept that somebody ought to deal with.

RHG: It strikes me as a very severe judgement.

HRH: It is a severe judgement.

RHG: Did you agree with the President about this?

HRH: It's severe put in its starkest terms. I think you've got to take it in a general rather than in a stark, specific sense. First of all, it doesn't apply to everybody. It's a generalization that applies only in degree to any individual person within the press corps, or the academic community, or the intellectual community in general, or the leadership community, or the elitist community, or the "Eastern Establishment", or

any other broad group. As a group, that's a broad generalization that applies in some degree to each member of the group. To virtually no degree to some people, and to a very high degree to other people, and to a moderate degree to most people. Things skew themselves out that way in all cases. There's a danger in making an extreme statement, and then applying it in the extreme. That's an extreme statement that must be applied very moderately and only if the shoe fits should one try to wear it.

The fact remains that, in a general sense, this is what he believed, and in a general sense I concur in that belief. I did then, and I do now. I find it myself. People have decided that they want to do an article with me, or write an article, or do an interview or something, co-authors on books, and that sort of thing, and I've told them, "Don't bother. Nobody will print it, if it's going to be a positive thing about me, or positive about Nixon." They say, "Well there you are, the old Nixon paranoia." I say, "Fine, try it. Take the positive thing and see how far you get." There have been a number of cases where they have done it and found exactly what I have said is true. The network won't carry the story; the publisher won't publish the article; the book publisher doesn't want a book that does that. They say, "Gee, I don't understand why." I [say], "I do." There is a tendency--not an absolute rule, that these people are intellectual fascists or something like that, but rather, there's a tendency--among these people not to be willing, or able, to see the good in a Nixon, or a Haldeman, because they have so strongly committed themselves intellectually to the belief that Nixon and

Haldeman (by rub-off or by his own acts) is basically bad. Therefore seeing good, is not a good thing.

Now, a Christian religious person has a different approach to that because his training is to be forgiving, and to be willing to forgive, and accept repentance, or atonement, or whatever requirement he puts into that forgiveness thing. The intellectual, once he's committed to an intellectual position, has a difficult wicket to get over to reverse that position. It requires him to say, "I was wrong."

Now, Steve [Stephen E.] Ambrose has done that, to a degree, which I find very interesting. I really do find, intellectually, what he's done in his first volume [Nixon: The Education of a Politician, 1913-1962] the most sound of anything I have seen done on Nixon to date. Ambrose started out as an anti-Nixon person, by his own statement, and has been surprised by what he's found as he's delved into his study of Nixon in the pre-Presidential study that the first book covered. From recent contact with him I understand that that discovery process continues as he's working his way through the Presidency. That puts Ambrose, in my opinion, which may very well be wrong, in a small community of intellectual historians, academicians, who had intellectually built in their own minds a strong anti-Nixon bias but who, confronted with what they believe now to be unassailable facts, are revising that viewpoint and saying, "I was mistaken," at least in some degree. That, I think, is a hard exercise for those people to do.

It's even harder for a journalist, because he's published

more on a continuing basis and it's requiring him to swallow more of his words that have been laid before the public, and that's a tough exercise. I think journalists are generally inclined not to do that, but rather to ignore their past, and if they do move to a favorable position, simply state it as the fact as of today and not go back and say, "I was wrong before, this is what it really is." They just say, "This is what it is."

That's what I explained to Dan Rather back when he was a White House reporter instead of an eminent anchorman. [It] was what I called a "Ratherism", which was the Rather career path to success in broadcast journalism. Which was to step out on the White House lawn every night and make an absolutely positive statement that something is believed or that something is going to happen, or has happened, or may happen--no, not may, will, or at least, probably, will happen--and make it very firm and positive. Not based on knowledge; based on the best groping he could do that day. Saying, "Well, this is the best I can come up with tonight, so tonight I'm going to go out and say, 'Tomorrow they're going to do this, do so-and-so.'" Then tomorrow if we do so-and-so, then he comes on tomorrow night and says, "As reported by this reporter last night, the White House has today done so-and-so." If we don't do the so-and-so that he said last night we were going to do, then tonight when he comes on he reports something totally different. He doesn't come on and say, "I was wrong last night when I said they were going to do so-and-so." He comes on and says, "Something else happened today." As a result, you build a continuing record of successful predictions,

and nobody's keeping score on the unsuccessful ones, and all of a sudden you rise up and become anchorman. Rather didn't appreciate my analysis but it's exactly what he did. Followed the path and became what I predicted he would become.

RHG: I can think of a few different ways that Nixon could have responded to the unfavorable press that he got, beginning with this kind of an attitude that we're talking about here. This intellectual pride concept. He could have tried to shmooze them, and just wine and dine them, or however one does it, and make friends out of them. He could have tried to change perceptions of the audience, since journalists have to write for an audience. I think part of what you're describing is the fact that once the audience is created, it's awfully hard to change it. It's awfully hard to change the desires of the reading audience. Or he could have, as much as he could, shut them out. Which did he usually choose to do?

HRH: He moved from one to the next. He tried the shmooze one on a one-on-one basis, tried to to develop relationships, and have good relationships with some journalists and some broadcast people. Not very many.

RHG: Do you remember who some of those were?

HRH: Willard Edwards, The Chicago Tribune. Frank Cormier, Associated Press. To a great extent, the great dean of the press corps at the United Press [International] [who] died while Nixon was in office and was replaced by Helen Thomas. [Merriman Smith.] That's terrible, that I can't remember his name, it should come to me right away. The guy at The Washington Star. There were

then some that were.... Tom Brokaw was covering the White House some of that time. Tom Brokaw was generally fair where Rather was on a totally different track. Sam Donaldson was playing his own Sam Donaldson game. A guy--I shouldn't name any of these people still in the business, because if I name them as being viewed as favorable to Nixon it would ruin their careers from here on out, but I guess most of them are far enough along now so it doesn't matter. Tom Jarriel on ABC. Actually, the guy I mentioned at The New York Times,...

RHG: Semple?

HRH: ...Bob Semple, was regarded.... Nixon developed a pretty good rapport with him, and it was possible to do it--Semple was pretty fair most of the time. But [Hugh] Sidey's an example on the other way. Sidey always seems like a nice guy, and is objective and all that, but Sidey writes the story he wants to write. If you do the schmoozing thing with Sidey, he uses your shmoozes and turns them against you. So, Nixon gave up the schmoozing thing with Sidey. You have to look at it pretty much on an individual basis, and of course there's such an enormous press corps that you can't do it. But he did try to do it. We had things at San Clemente and at the White House, parties for the press corps, Christmas parties where they brought their wives and children and Nixon moved around as a real good guy in those. They would say, "Geez, you know, he's a nice guy," but, then they'd turn around and zap him the next day anyway.

More important to them than the personal relationship, or the nice guy thing, was the judgement of their peers, and they

perceived the judgement of their peers to be that they had fallen to his fanny-patting if they wrote something good, so they wrote something bad because that was more fashionable. That's an unfair, broad-scale criticism again, because any broad-scale thing, as I keep saying, is unfair. I've got to establish that as a premise and discount it on that basis. But say that you still have to make generalities because you're dealing with a generality.

Changing the audience, we tried to do. We tried to do by encouragement of reportage that was positive. Of cooperation with people who did favorable reportage and fair reportage. By a very intensive program of the President going on television himself and of trying to get other people on television. Klein set up a very elaborate process when we were launching a particular program, making people available for "Meet the Press", someone else available for "Face the Nation", someone else available for a special interview with The New York Times. Setting those things up. Accomodating, in the best possible ways that we could.

The most effective thing was the President himself going on television. We did that more effectively than anybody, including Kennedy, for a long time, in a technique that we had of saying, "The President will make a major address to the nation tonight at nine o'clock." We used prime time, and by making it a Presidential major address to the nation, all three networks carried it. By the realities of television, if you get the same program on all three networks, an enormous percentage of the

people see it, because they turn on [the] television regardless of what's on, and if there's no basketball game or soap opera to watch, they watch whatever is available. They shift to the other network, and if there's nothing else available there either, they watch what's on. So they watch the President for half an hour. And we got enormous audiences on television by that process, until later in the administration, when the networks smartened up and started doing pool coverage. Where only one network would carry the major address, and the other two would carry the regular programming, and they would alternate which network was going to cover it. Once they started doing that, the audience dwindled down to a minute thing, because people don't watch Presidential addresses if there's anything else to watch. So it's hard to go direct. We had a technique that worked very well for quite awhile, and we could see the differences, we could see the changes. We did an analysis of poll standing versus television appearances, and we could see where television appearances changed public opinion of how the President's doing his job.

RHG: Now, I know Nixon was always fooling with when to do his press conference, and in what format to make it to get the same kind of thing. Whether to have a prime time press conference, or one earlier in the day.

HRH: Right. The prime time was a strong impetus to do that, because there's a much bigger audience available. If you go prime time on all three networks you've got a huge captive audience. If you go prime time on one network you have a large potential audience, but a lot of it turns off to the other networks. If you go in

daytime, you'll have a small potential audience, because there's not nearly as many people watching TV at all, and so even if you're on all three networks you get a captive audience, but it's a small captive audience. If you're only on one network in daytime, you have a very small audience, because the total audience is small, and your share becomes small.

RHG: But on the other hand, I saw this in here [Haldeman's journal], that sort of thing gave him the opportunity to appear more often, without fear of overexposure.

HRH: That's right, but there was a question.... That's sort of a contradiction in terms. Is appearing often valuable if you don't have the exposure? The purpose of appearing is to be exposed. So, you got one thing fighting against the other there, that is a problem on the daytime thing. But what it did do was satisfy the press that they were getting more frequent press conferences, and stop the negative thing of the press, as they are now with Reagan, of saying the President hasn't had a press conference for seventeen months and three days. That he's afraid of a press conference, and all that.

Going back to the mystique concept, and rolling through some of where it was. I'm still at the end of the second year, in December of 1970. Nixon got into a discussion with me about his concern that we've talked about a little, that the White House operation itself, was being presented as an efficient machine. Which we were. He felt that was not good from a public opinion viewpoint. It built the White House as being an efficient machine, but it didn't build the President, as a man, in the way

that you would want. Which would be to project his courage, his boldness, his intelligence, and the human qualities behind his foreign policy successes, rather than just mechanistic successes that were brought about by an efficient machine that was doing a good job in an efficient manner. His point there was that the humanizing or human qualities of the President were important to the people, and therefore were important factors that should be worked into the thing. Were factors the President could do by his mode of presentation, but other people could do by their description of their President, and their citing of anecdotal material, and how the President worked, and that sort of thing. He felt we needed to work toward that. Still in December, toward the end of the year, he was talking about needing to get out what the President's really like and how he works. That he's highly disciplined, that he's a man of austerity and [has] a spartan approach to things. That he works hard, but that he's bold, and takes innovative steps. Moves forward, using this discipline to carry these things out effectively.

RHG: I notice, I think in the same entry you're looking in, that he comments that other than himself, the country is almost leaderless. That he is the one leader in the country, and [Nelson A.] Rockefeller and [Ronald W.] Reagan are the only strong governors, and Congress doesn't have any leadership at all.

HRH: Hm hmm. He follows that up by saying, "Don't waste time in your public opinion activities with process and programs. Emphasize what Nixon's like. Emphasize the personality, the human

characteristic and all that." A little later he was making the point that now that DeGaulle had died, Nixon was de facto the world leader, and that we should build his reputation as a world leader. Bill Rogers came up with a concept that he felt was a strongly valid and promotable point, which was that Nixon was the youngest elder statesman in the world. Even though he was still in the first part of his first term in office, he was now the world elder statesman. Build that mystique as a world leader, which would give that thing out.

Recurring through all this, time after time, is this point that the staff isn't getting the enthusiasm thing across in their own thing, and the concept of the President's strength of character and his achievements. The need to have a clear, defined image of the President and the administration. If we could get it clear enough, and well enough defined, that then the journalists couldn't blur it by the negative concepts, but how do you do that?

RHG: I was interested in one element of the image that shows up again and again in here, is that it's to be one.... And these are qualities that one doesn't automatically think of with Nixon, but he kept insisting upon this religious, inspirational quality, and uplift.

HRH: Right, right.

RHG: January 3, 1971: "Nixon concerned that staff be given inspiration and uplift. Can't just run a tough shop." That's something that is recurring in here, too, that the emotions of people have to be engaged.

HRH: In that specific context, he's not talking about public opinion, though. He's talking about within the staff. He's criticizing me directly there, and saying, "You can't just run a tough shop. You can't just bash the staff and say, 'Do this.' You can't keep whipping them. You've got to inspire them and uplift them. You can't just use them as automatons, robots doing their job and winding them up. You've got to give them inspiration and uplift." And the President has to. He's recognizing there that he needs--but he's really putting it off on me and others within the senior staff--to keep the staff fired up and enthused.

Now, he's right to a degree on that, but there was a very high level of staff enthusiasm and uplift within the staff, especially at that time, the end of the second year, the start of the third year. You have to work on all those things. They all come together. He goes up and down. As we get into the latter part of January in '71 he's worried about overusing the President again, debasing the currency, where a little earlier he was saying, "We've got to get maximum exposure."

RHG: It seemed that he was always fluctuating around the question of how much to use the television, and in what way.

HRH: Right, right. A few weeks later he's arguing that the TV appearances don't move him up in the polls so he shouldn't--maybe they aren't doing that. I'm going to talk later about the polls. The frequent theme: "People forget what you do; they only think of the man and we're not getting that side of the story across. People don't understand the man." And that's a valid point. I think Nixon the man was always mysterious in the negative sense,

rather than in a positive mystique sense. I don't know that you could do anything about it.

RHG: To talk about it from the other direction sounds a little shocking, sometimes. When you say "positively" you want to present an image of the President and the "Nixon the man" theme and so on, that makes sense. But when you hear it turned around and say, on February 27, 1971, "Nixon [concluded] that the White House staff cannot be allowed to talk about substance on television," that sounds rather stark.

HRH: Yeah, and I'm not sure what brought that about. There was something that some staff person got up. I think what he's saying there is that staff can't be allowed to talk about issue substance, program substance. What he's saying is that that should be done by Cabinet and sub-Cabinet people. By people in the Departments responsible for the substance, rather than the White House staff. In other words, it should not be brought into the White House. The staff people should be doing the behind the scenes staffwork, but the out-front presentation on television should be the Cabinet officer concerned. I think that's what he was saying at that time because I know that was a concept that he had.

RHG: At the same time he's talking about wanting to put a PR man on every issue as it proceeds: "Every issue as it proceeded would be watched carefully by someone assigned to that issue to think how the White House wants that to play."

HRH: That's the start--maybe not the start but it's a continuation--of a running thing that I talked about a little bit yesterday, on

which he and I had a total disagreement. His concept being PR.... Ehrlichman shared this with the President. Ehrlichman's thing always was, "We here in the Domestic Council or they over in the HEW [Health, Education and Welfare] Department, or whatever it might be, have developed this great program. Now get your PR people and get it sold." My answer was, "That isn't the way that kind of thing happens. It's not 'PR people' that sell it. It's you, the people that developed the program, the Department that developed the program, have got to be the people [that] sell the program." They're the ones who understand it. They're the ones who believe in it. That's what sells it. Not PR. It isn't glitter that sells those things. It's properly planned and orchestrated presentation of it, yes. But it's got to be done by the people who did it.

The point was, there should be a PR man watching every issue as it proceeds, counselling the substantive people on how to present it, and so forth. To think what we want to get done from it and see that it gets that kind of mileage. But not to do it. As a consultant. As a mechanic to aid in the technique of presenting it effectively.

RHG: So every Cabinet officer really should have had an aide who just came to him.

HRH: They did. They all had their own PR people and press people.

RHG: But it didn't succeed in making....

HRH: Didn't work too well. In some cases it did, in some cases it didn't. Then we come in, still in that winter of '71, to a whole new approach, which was fantastic in a way, which was kind of

evolved by John Connally. Who was a very astute politician and had a very good sense of how to develop public support and of course had been a close associate of John Kennedy's and Lyndon Johnson's and a student of their techniques, and so forth. His advice at this point was, the thing to do is create enemies, and use your enemies as.... In other words, a man is judged by the quality of his enemies, in effect. And to build that up. His point was, "You--the President--can't do it. Other people have to do this for you." My answer to that, laughingly, was, "We don't have any problem creating enemies, so we don't need to do that. What we need to do is follow up what you're saying. Get a benefit from the enemy." A useful enemy, in other words. The fact that so-and-so is against you becomes a positive rather than a negative.

RHG: Was Nixon enthusiastic about that idea?

HRH: Yeah, yeah. He picked that up for awhile, and made the point that one enemy we could make is the television networks. [President] Reagan's doing it, of course, making the enemy the media. You make the enemy the Congress, when they oppose you on an issue, and you go to the people and say, "I'm with you, the people, trying to get this done, and these people--our enemy, yours and my enemy, the Congress--are doing the wrong things about this." Or, "Our enemy the media aren't telling you what's really happening." In other words you turn around.... That did have some appeal to Nixon. As we went along it came out as something we ought to do. Go ahead.

RHG: I'm recalling from your journal that one of the things that Nixon

tried to do was essentially to separate off the rest of television broadcasting from the networks. The local stations, and I guess that was really true with all the media.

HRH: Yeah. The problem is, that's very difficult to do. The networks have the reach and power. That's a point, but it isn't a readily doable activity.

Following up the Connally thing though, Nixon is concerned, in a discussion with me about the fact that because we have an unfavorable press (accepting that as a reality), there has to be someone around the President who isn't cool, pragmatic and organized. Who can follow up the good things the President does and get the story out on a warm, human basis rather than a cold, pragmatic basis. We don't have that. Actually, we did have it. That was.... Bud Wilkinson was working that kind of thing for awhile. Dick [Richard A.] Moore later on came along to do that, which I'll talk about when I get into the people thing. John Connally was very good at that sort of thing. Pat Moynihan was good at that sort of thing. And there were others who could build that enthusiasm. But [both] Moynihan and Connally, specifically as individuals, at various occasions hit, head on, exactly this point, in private, closed meetings with the members of the Cabinet and the senior staff. And they deeply believed it themselves.

They said, "You people are the ones that have got to build the President's public opinion standing. And you've got to do it by going out and expressing your convictions about the things he's doing in enthusiastic ways, and you've got to tell people

the story of how personable and warm and human he is and that sort of thing. You can do that because you work with him every day and therefore you're a believable source. The President can't go out and say, 'Look at me, I'm a warm, lovable human being.' You've got to sell that point to the media and to the people".

[End side one]

[Begin side two]

HRH: Just following up that same point, a recurring comment that comes up again and again is the President's view that the White House do a marvelous job of running the government, carrying procedures and policies through, and all that. But they don't do a good job of selling it, of presenting it to the people. We've got to recognize that, basically, we're in a continual political campaign. We're campaigning every day for our programs, to get them through Congress; for support of the President in his dealings with foreign leaders, foreign nations, foreign policy issues, and all that sort of thing. At that point he singled out Chuck Colson as being the only one on the staff that had any zing, because Colson was enthusiastic and charged up and went out and said outrageous things. Like, "I'd walk over my grandmother for...."

RHG: Now, he never said that. We learned that.

HRH: I know, but he was quoted as saying it.

RHG: And he could have said it, probably.

HRH: He could have said it. That's right. It was a believable attribution, even if not accurate. That we dealt with. Connally

stayed in this whole concept of people needing to back up the President. He made the point that we do have to attack our enemies, that "create an enemy and use him thing." But he also said, "We've got to go on the other side and get the warm, human side of the Presidency across." The President, obviously, blames other people for that, as these discussions come along, and he's saying the speechwriters are.... I'm going to get into that, the speechwriter problem. He's saying that they were so cold and specific, and that that made the President appear that way, and that he had to inject all the warmth. Interestingly, he was the one who injected a lot of the anecdotal material and sort of the human approach stuff into a lot of the Presidential speeches. That was a thing that he was concerned about.

He also was concerned that we didn't pick up the little things. That we were not anecdotally oriented--we the staff and the Cabinet--and that we didn't remember.... People would go out of a meeting with the President saying, "I can't believe what a wonderful warm person he is, and yet everything you hear about him is the other way." Well, we should be picking up the things that cause the people to say that, and getting those multiplied. Getting those understood by other people. And we weren't doing that. It's hard to do.

RHG: It strikes me that one of the things that did not occur through this is, that Nixon never did just sit down and say to himself, "This is the way that I feel about this, and now I'm going to decide what to do about it. And we're going to solve this problem now." That doesn't seem to have occurred.

HRH: Oh, I think it occurred almost daily. I'm not sure what you mean.

RHG: The discussion of the problem occurred daily....

HRH: Right.

RHG: ...and presumably orders and directions issuing out of the office occurred daily, but it was right back the next day.

HRH: Oh, yeah. But the reason was that we never found a productive, resultful way of doing it. It wasn't that he didn't sit us down periodically and say, "This is going to be done." He kept trying to do that. He tried it with the Cabinet. He tried it using emissaries, the Connallys and Colsons and such of the world, to get it done. Here's Connally in the middle of the first term saying that the Cabinet's got to go on the attack, and that Nixon should make changes in the Cabinet in order to get good spokesmen who can and will do that. So you have to deal with that issue and....

RHG: There's an item here that reminds me of what you said yesterday about Nixon being a better loser than a winner. On March 30, 1971, in the midst of all these things we've been going through where Nixon, sometimes in a fairly successful point [in] his Presidency, as in 1969, worried about the image and seemingly [fretted] endlessly about it, and yet here, March 1971, both of you feel that "The administration's at an all-time low. The polls are scraping the bottom, and the magazines are running 'Nixon is in trouble' stories...." Yet at a time like this, Nixon is serene and he feels confident about the programs that they have in place, and he says, "This will bottom out."

HRH: This is an introspective view of mine, I think, that I'm sort of sitting there, half-way through the first term, saying, "Here we are at an all-time low. The polls are low; the credibility rating's low; the magazines are saying 'Nixon's in trouble'; everything is bad" (this was Cambodia time); and all this kind of stuff. And yet, the President and the staff and the Cabinet were all in a good mood and all optimistic, and I was trying to figure out why that was. My analysis was, that the reason we were optimistic where everything else around was negative was that we were looking to the future. We knew where we were going; they didn't know where we were going. They were looking at where we were and saying, "This is a mess," or we're "in trouble," or "They've got problems," while we were looking at where we were headed, and why we were doing it, and that we were willing to keep working to get there and had confidence that we were going to get there, and therefore had reason for optimism in the future.

In the process of that, at that time, I was looking at our status. The domestic economy was improving at that time, so we were in good shape there. A SALT agreement was right around the corner (we knew, although they didn't yet). So we were optimistic about that; knew that was going to be a pick-up for us. We thought, at that time, that we would get a Vietnam peace settlement in the summer. That, of course, was the overall light at the end of the tunnel thing that we picked up from Lyndon Johnson, that we often thought that we were right around the corner from a Vietnam peace settlement.

What I was doing was sitting there, at that time, reflecting on the status of the first half of the first term sort of thing, and concluded to myself that this week of end-of-March/start-of-April of 1971, was going to mark the low point of the first term. From here on, things were going to start going up. Actually, I wasn't too far off. I was pretty accurate in that. If you look at the polls, and you look at the build-up from there, that really was pretty much the low point of the first term. After that we started troop withdrawal announcements and a big gradual build-up from there, and I said, "Next week will start the beginning of a gradual ascent. A rise." And it did.

RHG: Nixon at this time was just about to begin pulling out--I know the language is a bit too deliberate--his most successful device to accomplish all these things we've been talking about, and that was "the big play."

HRH: Hm hmn.

RHG: That was the most successful thing that he did. And when we were talking about the failure of Nixon to have a good press and so on earlier, I was thinking, "But there was one time when everything seemed to fall into place, and that was during most of 1972." Certainly during the campaigning season.

HRH: Of course, here we're still in early '71.

RHG: Right. But in the summer of '71 you get the first two big plays,...

HRH: Right.

RHG: ...the China announcement at least...

HRH: Right.

RHG: ...and then the new economic policy in August. It's the beginning of it. The summer of 1972 Nixon looked very, very good. I think the "Nixon the man" image was out there. And I think it was probably hard for the press to break that down. With all those stories running about Watergate in the summer of '72, [they] had no effect on the public at all.

HRH: I've been sort of negative in my.... And it's because we were in the first half of the first term, when the PR thing was--we were groping with negatives. We were working our way into some successful things, too. We were getting some of the "Nixon the man" stuff across in a positive way, and Nixon was, and the Cabinet [was]. There were some results to all these concerns that were expressed, and this goading that kept going on. There was some positive stuff.

Right after my end of March ['71] analysis of the first half of the first term, and my feeling that we'd hit the low point, I had a talk with Nixon in which he was trying to focus on moving forward on a positive basis by more effective use of television, which was his concept at that point. That we had spent too much time on Congress, and the media, and all of that, and it wasn't doing us any good, and we should give our attention to our hardcore enthusiasts. Build them up. Try to dominate the dialogue ourselves, rather than letting other people take the initiative. The way to do that, primarily, is the big plays, as you were talking about, and by maintaining a proper level of presence on television himself (the President himself). And moving Cabinet people and other people into more frequent and

more positive projections on television.

At that point, as we always did in these kinds of discussions, he [the President] would come up with a formula. "This is what we'll do." And his formula then was that we'd have a prime time press conference every month, and that we'd also have one other major TV appearance every month. We would look for something to do a major television thing, not necessarily a Presidential address, but an event, something that commanded major television attention. Plus, a prime time press conference which would be carried by all the networks, and give the President that kind of exposure. He was very good at those press conferences, and they were very effective. His point there was, "Get off of the nickel and dime stuff, the little bits and pieces." No matter how nickels and dimes you come up with, you can't dominate the dialogue. If you threw a hundred dollar bill down on the table, you'd get everybody's attention. You could put a hundred dollars worth of nickels and dimes there, and it doesn't do it. His point was, "Do one big event, and dominate the dialogue."

Then, he carried that into one of our campaign concepts that we always used, which was do one contact event every day. One thing where you're doing a personal, people-type of thing that symbolically is significant even though it's not a big event. But have something that's people contact. [President]-to-the-people type thing, that gets a little news story. "President Nixon today met the March of Dimes poster girl, and kicked her off her crutches," or something." [Laughter] Other than doing

that, as a routine thing, focus on the big events. Do the thing on the big side, rather than poking around with all those little things.

RHG: Just an aside on the use of television. I'm remembering "The Day in the Life of the President" program that NBC [the National Broadcasting Company] did. I forget the exact time.

HRH: Right.

RHG: It was later on in the Presidency.

HRH: Right.

RHG: I ran into this after going through your journal for all the earlier period, and seeing how this President scheduled his time. When it got to this "Day in the Life of the President" day, he worked from five in the morning until midnight and the television crews were having to follow him around.

HRH: We said it wasn't a typical day. We said it was a composite of the various kinds of things the President does during [his] days.

Even at this same time though, Connally's still making the pitch that the Cabinet and the staff don't have any passion or commitment. They need warmth and strength and they've got to project these things, and they've got to change what they say about it. The President's saying that "We haven't gotten the courage and guts image across. We let think everything is political and get caught into that thing. We need to get some strong salesman in the Cabinet." There he specifically was commenting that [Clifford M.] Hardin of Agriculture and [Maurice H.] Stans of Commerce were not strong salesmen and that we needed to get them out, and Stans ought to go over to the Committee [to

Re-elect].

Then he got into a whole thing with Ehrlichman, regarding the Domestic Council thing. Urging them to start thinking about goals instead of programs. That's this big picture thing again. The President told John [Ehrlichman] that, "We've got to personalize these goals and conceptualize them in broad terms and with a visionary outlook instead of just the mechanics of developing programs and legislation to carry out the programs." His approach to that, at that point, was to try to get Ehrlichman to pull himself out, and to get George Shultz to pull himself out, of operations and programmatical type things, and start thinking of the public opinion opportunities. The appeals that we could make and new ideas [we could use so] that we could present the programs we already had in new ways, so that they would be perceived not just as mechanistic programs again, but as people related things. Things that mattered to people. Get away from the emphasis on how to run our domestic program and answering the mechanical questions, and turn around to answering the question that the individual asks, which is, "What's in it for me?" Relate it to people.

And then in concert with his concept a few weeks earlier, he's pushing [for] moving to the big things, going for great goals, even if they're unachievable. Making them goals that we aim for even if we can't get to them. Like a hundred million jobs. Like increasing family income by \$10,000. Like two bathrooms in every house. The things that relate to individual concerns. We had taken a name of the "new American revolution"

as a tool to cover the whole Nixon domestic program and he felt, "That's a dud." And he thought it was because people don't care how you run the government. The mechanics and all that aren't of any interest to them. All they want is for government to cost less. If you could make the point that we're spending less money, that's more important to them than how you're going about doing it.

Then go for the positive issues that people really do care about, like water, and education, and crime in the streets. The things that affect individuals themselves rather than the society as a whole.

RHG: I sense the danger here with the approach. The danger being that in the instance of this [journal] entry, it sounds as if the image is overriding the reality.

HRH: No. It's a matter of putting the image onto the reality. What he's saying is, "We're emphasizing how we do it, and not the "What's the benefit of it?" To shift the emphasis, go for the things.... In the public presentation--it doesn't mean stop doing the work of government, stop developing the programs and the mechanics of the programs--it means put them into a way.... Think politically about them. He's saying now what I've been saying. He's saying, "Get the people who are doing the things to think about their benefits, not just the mechanics. Instead of worrying about running things well, worry about what matters to people." At this stage, he's convinced that he doesn't need to worry that we will stop running things well. His problem is, we're spending so much time and effort running things well that

we're not getting any credit for doing anything at all. Then he hits this problem that is just the reverse of what he was saying before. He's now saying, "We have a lot of PR people, but no PR ideas or phrases." My point is that they have to come from the people who are working on the programs. They don't come from PR people. They don't come from outsiders. I kept working to try and get that point across to him. And he's looking for ideas. He's trying to get the thing....

In answer to your point, here is a direct quote from the President, right at that period, which I think is very significant. He says, "Public relations is right, if it emphasizes the truth. It's wrong, at least for us, if it's untrue." That's the point you've got to keep in mind. Sure, you're pushing the public relations, but you've got to publicize what we're doing, not pie-in-the-sky. He said, "Our substantive people have to realize that they have to do the things with an eye to public relations, to public opinion on it. They should keep that in mind as they go along." And I think that's exactly right. That was our problem, and the thing we did have to do.

RHG: Although I've just been thinking of two examples of potential for difficulty here. It's related to something else in the way that the Nixon Presidency worked. Nixon let others take on a good little bit of his Presidential authority and responsibility, particularly when it was something that he wasn't interested in. The best example is--these are both examples of domestic policy programs--where he would let Ehrlichman do a good little bit in the President's name, both because he trusted Ehrlichman's

judgement, but also because he wasn't particularly interested in one program activity.

HRH: He never let him get out from under Presidential control. There was a.... He let him do all the work.

RHG: Right. And Ehrlichman would....

HRH: He didn't spend time thinking about it, but he reviewed the results of that before anything ever was implemented or approved.

RHG: Right, right, but I'm thinking of two cases where something was in process of being part of the Nixon administration's domestic program. I just want to present this for your comment: I think that when Nixon started to look these programs [in] terms of the public relations consideration, his attitudes were contrary to the work that had been done [up] to that point. One example being the environmental program, which Ehrlichman carried to quite a degree. When Nixon looked at the program, when large parts of it were already in place, he saw that the environmental issue is one that is very expensive. In terms of that question that he keeps asking over and over again: "What is in this for me?" that the individual man asks. What the individual man sees is that he's losing a job because the environmental program has shut down a plant. It sounds as if at that point he turns rather strongly against that particular issue. That environmentalism is not his program.

HRH: Well, it's interesting--in August of '71, mid-year, he made the comment to me that "We have the best staff in history in terms of substance and the worst for public relations." He followed that up by saying, "We have four points that we've got to concentrate

on at this stage. Number one, the basic point of bold, courageous leadership." In other words, [this] mystique conceptual point. "Second, President Nixon as the world leader for peace." The whole peace concept, which was again general. Third was character, decency, (this is the President himself): "His character, his decency, a family man, a respectable man, a first family to be proud of." Those are human points he wanted to get across. And the fourth point was "Prosperity without war and without inflation." Okay. Then he says to Ehrlichman in that same context, "We've got to worry about the issues of crime and drugs. Those are important. But don't do anything more than show compassionate interest on the environment." In other words, what he's saying is, you talk about the environment, but don't do anything about it. Because it's something people want to hear about, but everything you do about it only does harm. Whereas crime and drugs they not only want to hear about, they want action, because they want something done. So he's pushing that.

Then he expresses great disturbance with Colson because he always wants vicious attacks on people that do anything. That we shouldn't be doing the attacks. We should concentrate on the positive of the President. Then, on your budget cut thing, he's talking to [George P.] Shultz at OMB [Office of Management and Budget, then called Bureau of the Budget] about really pushing for budget cuts at the "do-good" agencies. What he called the enemy agencies, like HEW [Health, Education and Welfare] and HUD [Housing and Urban Development], where they're spending money that doesn't go back to the general concerns that people have.

- RHG: My thought--that makes it in a different way--is that the way he pursued his concept of public relations put him at war, occasionally, with his own administration.
- HRH: That's exactly right. With segments within his administration. Because there wasn't unity within the administration. So when he went to war with Shultz about cutting HEW and HUD, that put him maybe at war with HUD and HEW and Shultz, but it got [Patrick J.] Buchanan and a lot of other people in the administration very charged up positively.
- RHG: And with the environmental program, too, I think the same kind of thing had happened. The other example I was thinking of was the Family Assistance Plan, where somewhere in [your journal notes] he starts musing about whether or not he wants it to pass. This is after two or three years of working very hard on it. But he's just found out he's not too sure he likes the way it's playing as an issue and maybe he'd like to get rid of it. He starts talking about whether he'd like to just put it before the Congress and don't fight for it too hard, and let the Democrats kill it.
- HRH: He had ambivalent views on that whole thing all the way along. He was never fully convinced that it really did what he was trying to do in the welfare area. He was convinced it was better than other things, but he wasn't totally sold. So there was an ambivalence all the way through that thing. But he was anxious to try and get some form of welfare reform through in some way. At first he wanted something doable, then he got to worrying that maybe this one wasn't the right thing, but it was too late to undo it. He had to just let it flounder, if that's what it would

do.

RHG: Looking at the same point from the other direction, I think his potentially looking at issues from the point of view of the image they will make, can lead possibly to a commitment which is not entirely ingenuous. I'm thinking of the interest in crime and drugs here. Because somewhere in your notes Nixon comes out and says, "Well, there's not really too much the Federal government can do about....", I forget which one of these, or both of them, it was. "That has to be done at a local level. But we'll come out and we'll be in favor of this because it sells great."

HRH: Yeah, but there's also an initiative that the Federal government can provide. We can't solve the problem. The Federal government can't solve the problem but it can provide impetus and, in the process, get credit for providing impetus toward solving the problem. What he's talking about there is that leadership has got to recognize it's got to do what it can in the directions the people want action taken, and that's an area where action is needed. Even though it's not essentially a Federal government issue or area of responsibility, it is an area in which the Federal government can--and should appear to be providing productive nudging, because it's an area [where] people want something done.

It's interesting, when we get to the start of '72, following up some of what we wallowed through, back and forth, in '71, that Pat Buchanan, the super-conservative on the White House staff, had come up with a thesis that the whole concept of a professional President was the wrong posture. That Nixon should

be presenting himself as a fighting President and should find someone to do battle with so he could be a fighting President, instead of just a professional President. In other words, somebody that's out in the arena doing something instead of just here quietly running the store. Which goes right back to the Connally thing of finding useable enemies. Connally said the same thing. But he said, "First get [the People's Republic of] China open, and then find an enemy. That led into a wide ranging discussion where Nixon got into the concept of maybe forming a whole new political party after the election, and bringing about a coalition that would be totally different from what the Republican party represented. Obviously [he] didn't go very far with that.

Connally's point on the enemy thing was, "Wait until the natural enemy appears, and then embrace that natural enemy," like [the] economy, or ecology, or unemployment. Whatever might be a good available enemy. Don't create one; wait 'til one appears. But then, instead of ignoring it or something, build it up. Use it. Connally had the other interesting concept that the President needs to build four emotions in the people: love, fear, hate and respect. All four. Which is....

RHG: That's a hard thing to....

HRH: Oh, yeah. Trying to get emotional response to the President. That, as we got into '72, a lot of this stuff--the public relations, public opinion concerns--do relate directly to the political question. That brought us up to the comment I was looking for which we were talking about earlier, the 90% thing.

In April the President was making the point that, "The liberal establishment is always going to be against us, because I", Nixon, "am not one of them and I won't pay attention to them. I don't dominate them, so they're going to oppose me." He thought we made a mistake in the first two years of the first term by talking to the liberals and trying to win them over when there's no hope of winning them over or changing them. "Instead, we've got to build a new establishment of our own."

This is the guts of the start of the concept of the new coalition that was the thing he was was trying to work on [at] the start of the second term. Building a new establishment. Fight the press through the Colson operation, the nutcutters as [the President] called them, forcing our own news. Making a brutal, vicious attack on the opposition. This is sort of Nixonian over-rhetoric type stuff. He says, "We have to realize that the press is 90%:10% against us, so we have to be 90%:10% better in what we put out. In other words, nine times as good in order to succeed. And it's hard to affect network television, but we can have an impact on local television.

Then he's back to the cutting out people like Sidey and John Osborne. The concept of creating a new establishment which was something he always believed in. He liked the idea but he didn't know how to do it effectively. I think we had started on some things that would have been effective in the second term.

RHG: That's something I want to talk about at some length.

HRH: If it had worked.

RHG: Right. It was a very exciting thing that really crystalized

during the.... There was a second transition that you all created there, from the first term to the second term, and I think at least part of the new establishment was to be created at that time. Is it your memory that Connally was at least one of the founders of that new establishment idea?

HRH: No, it wasn't.

RHG: No?

HRH: I may be wrong, but that isn't my memory. That was more Nixonian. I don't think Connally disagreed at all. I think he concurred in it. But I don't think it was one of his main things.

[Interruption]

RHG: All right. We'll talk about that new establishment [idea] at a later point at some length. Just to make one point about it now, it strikes me that what we've been talking about here, for the last hour or more [was] that the world was not with Nixon, entirely. He had a lot of opposition built into the system-- built into the establishment--to what he wanted to do, and just generally to his sense of freedom of action. We've been talking about ways in which he hoped to sufficiently alter that so that he did have this freedom of action. The new establishment idea, I felt when I was reading about it, towards the end of the first term, fighting with all these things for all this time, he just decided that he was going to re-make the world. He not only was going to try to influence it, which is mostly what we've been talking about. But he was going to try to completely re-make it as much as he could. He was going to buy a family television

station, a family newspaper--had plans to do both those things or at least thought about it. He was going to try to change the political structure, the two-party system, so that he could get the Congress that he wanted. What else? He was trying to change the bureaucracy as well...

HRH: Yeah.

RHG: ...and that's what we'll take about particularly, at greater length. So that the whole world that he faced would be different.

HRH: That's [a] very valid observation. I think it's [a not] illogical evolution, actually, because you come into a situation, as he came into the Presidency, and you have to deal with what's there. As you work at dealing with what's there, try to develop the techniques and approaches and all that to working with what's there, it becomes more and more readily apparent to you that a lot of what is there is undesirable from your viewpoint. Yet there's a lot that's there that is desirable but is not coalesced in a way that can accomplish [what's desired]. So, you start thinking, "If the structure that's here now isn't workable for me, instead of trying to change it, or change within it, maybe what I should do is change the structure itself." And that's exactly what he did set out to do.

A lot of unfortunate things happened that knocked that apart. Obviously Watergate [was] the worst of them all. But [there was also] the whole Agnew situation, versus having had the possible opportunity to bringing Connally in as Vice President, which I think would have been an enormous step toward a lot of

what he was trying to do, had he been able to do that. This concept of a new political party, he and Connally together could have been a very formidable figurehead in trying to bring a new political coalition together that might well end up being formalized as a new political party.

This wasn't new. This we talked about back in the '60's, in the early '60's. The fact that there were segments of the Republican party that were more Democrat than the Democrats and segments of the Democrat party that were more Republican than the Republicans. The parties were not reflective of a massing of one general ideological approach here and a massing of the other ideological approach here. That there were a lot of criss-crossing factors. That labor was traditionally Democrat even though it was ideologically Republican in many cases. That the South was traditionally Democrat but ideologically Republican. A lot of things like that. Plus, the opportunity to open the doors of conservative Republicanism, in one sense, to people who were traditionally liberal in another sense. There was a lot of potential there. Hopefully with the Vietnam War over, which we thought it was--and it was, actually, in January [1973], there was the opportunity to move ahead with initiative programs instead of reactive things. I don't know. I think that what you say makes a lot of sense. That he did.... I hadn't really thought about it that way, but I think he did see a, first of all, a reality that fighting the status quo didn't work. It was just so solid. So much was so solidly entrenched you couldn't undo it. The way to deal with it was to leave it there and say,

"Too bad", and go over here and build your own new status quo over here. Live with the environment that you create for yourself instead of the environment someone else left you. Obviously you [couldn't] totally do that, but you could take some substantial steps in those directions. And I think that's exactly what he was aiming at.

RHG: [You] mentioned yesterday in talking about Nixon's theory of the Presidency that he had a lot of ideas, but in the end, there were loose ends everywhere. I don't know what to think about this one. In a way I'm inclined to feel the same, that the public relations issues were never resolved.

HRH: No, they weren't, but progress was made. You moved.... I think maybe that's the way, overall, the political process works. You don't get it all resolved. You don't get all the loose ends tied up and end up with a neat package. But you do, even with all the loose ends sticking out, you do keep rolling the ball a little bit in the direction that you want it to go. And you tidy up some of the loose ends and pick up some new ones. I really think we had made progress, and I think we had laid the groundwork for substantial progress, and a lot of tidying up of loose ends in the second term. And I also believe that had he been successful in ending Vietnam in '69, which he had every reason to think he was going to be, that a lot of that would have progressed more rapidly in the first term.

RHG: The other thing I was going to say was that the new establishment, at least as an idea when you see it referred to on paper, certainly seems like a more comprehensive construction

that maybe wouldn't have had very many loose ends if it had succeeded. Of course, it's the nature of political life, as you're saying, that he probably would have never been able to do it all.

HRH: They don't succeed. Yeah, yeah.

RHG: Maybe something. Some part of it. Well, just as a last question, I talked a long time about this, and we've talked about things that happened over a period of four years and more. So my last question really is, were you and Nixon as one on all these questions?

HRH: Well, yes and no. [Laughter] We were, in a general sense, as one on virtually, maybe all, of these questions. We were not totally as one on.... That's conceptually. Implementationally not. I tend to.... I look at things in how you are going to carry [them] out. He does too, but he does it in a different way. He does it in extremes. I think it's evident that I very much disagreed on his PR thing, that the solution was get more PR men. My solution was not get more PR men. It was get more people attuned to the needs for PR considerations. I don't think I ever convinced him, and he never convinced me. I think that was an area where we diverged in our way of dealing with something.

I didn't have as extreme a view of dealing with the press as he did, but I definitely shared his basic viewpoint and agreed with it. I wasn't as intrigued with this building an enemy and making it useful as he and Connally were, but I think there was some merit to that as an approach. To work on it in the right

way. I think where there was an enemy that you could unify a lot of people with you in opposing, that that was worthwhile. Like make crime and drugs an enemy, and that's fine.

Making the media an enemy tends to be counterproductive. It's very tempting, and even more so now than it was then, because I think the media, in a general sense, is held in lower public esteem now than it was ten years ago, or twenty years ago. That's a whole other issue. Something needs to be done about the media problem. That's one big problem that I think faces the nation and the politics of the nation and the governance of the nation, and it's not a solution to try and go into in this context.

In a general sense and very remarkably so, I would say we were as one in pretty much everything. When I didn't agree with him, when I did have a divergent view, I expressed it. Often.... A lot of his more startling statements are to elicit response rather than to state a conclusion. So, I responded to it when I disagreed with him. Or, in some of them, he knew I disagreed and there wasn't any point in responding. I just let it go. A lot of them were highly repetitious, as you've seen in going through his materials. There wasn't a need, once the viewpoint was recorded, to repeat it over and over and prolong the discussion.

My policy, obviously, was that he was the decider in all issues and when something was debated I took a viewpoint, if I felt I had one and was qualified to have one, but once the decision was made I very definitely was one [with him]. I never, on a final decision, went contrary to it, except in some cases

not to act. I never acted against a decision. I sometimes didn't act pro the decision. And if that were the case, he knew it. I never ran into anything where I was so opposed that I felt we were down to an issue where I had to leave. I did that in one business thing, in a business I was in for seven years, after I got through the whole Watergate stuff, up until two years ago. There arrived a business decision that was made by the head guy. It was a make-or-break decision as far as I was concerned. I said, "If this is what we're going to do, I've got to leave. I understand the decision but I cannot participate in it and will not." Then it got modified and I didn't have to [quit]. I never got to that point at all at the White House. So, that kind of a disagreement never arose.

RHG: Well, thank you Mr. Haldeman. We'll continue on the details of public relations this afternoon.

[End side two cassette two]

[Begin side one cassette three]

RHG: All right, Mr. Haldeman. This morning we talked at some length about the President's need to project himself and his program in an appropriate way. One of the most important ways that was available to him was by way of speeches [on] television in particular, but in general through his speeches. Can you describe a bit the problems that Nixon had in getting his speeches prepared the way he wanted them?

HRH: Nixon was a tough client for a speechwriter to have, because he was very much involved in speech preparation himself. He did not simply wait until someone had written a speech for an occasion

and handed it to him and put it on the teleprompter, and then just read it. He was very directly involved in speech preparation. In the major addresses--State of the Union, Inaugural addresses, acceptance speeches at the conventions, that sort of thing--he did an enormous amount of the basic writing work himself. He spent lots of time on it. He worked with a yellow pad and alone. That was one of the subjects or times when he did want time to be alone and sit and work things through himself. He did it in longhand on yellow pads (long legal pads). He usually worked out an outline and then would spend a lot of time just jotting down notes and ideas of what he wanted to say, and then he'd go back and re-work things. Get them into phrases and start developing the thing. It was a long, involved process for a major speech.

As President, he had to give so many little speeches as well as big speeches. Little welcoming remarks at gatherings; speeches at all kinds of functions and ceremonies and arrival things for state visitors; and all that sort of thing. Plus, the major speeches: the addresses to the nation on television in prime time evening programs, and that sort of thing. So, there's a whole range of speechwriting requirements. He couldn't, obviously, take the time to write all those things, and he didn't.

But, his general pattern would be on a major speech--and let's sort of concentrate on those, because the minor ones were less of a problem and writers basically did the research on them. Gave him suggested remarks [on the minor ones], not written

speeches. He'd review the suggested remarks and talk from his own notes or from the outline or from the remarks. Once in awhile, on something that was technical or something, he'd substantially read a speech that someone else had prepared.

On the major speeches, he would give thought to what he wanted to say, the general content, context, of what he wanted to cover, would sometimes write some notes on it, and usually meet with whichever writer or group of writers was assigned to do that particular speech, and give them his thoughts at the outset. They would then go back, work on that plus their own research, and any contributions they could make in terms of what might be good things to include in that particular speech. Put together a draft that the President would then go over, reject, sit down and talk with them about: "Re-do this in this sense," and "Add some things here," and "Skip all this stuff," and all that.

Ultimately a speech would come out that he'd be more or less satisfied with and that he would deliver more or less in the form that it was written. The task of doing these, working with him on these, fell to the speechwriter group, which was a small group. Initially the principals [were] Pat [Patrick J.] Buchanan and Bill [William L.] Safire and Ray [Raymond K.] Price, others at other times, and some backup, more junior people working under those guys at times. But they were the principal speechwriters.

He was always dissatisfied. During the campaigns that I worked with him on, and when we got to the White House, there was a constant dissatisfaction with speechwriters. I think that was inevitable. I think there's a built-in, automatic

dissatisfaction, because he was dissatisfied with himself as a speechwriter, too. He'd work on his own speeches and say, "No, that's not right." And he'd start all over. When someone else did it, he'd do the same thing. He'd say, "This isn't any good."

So we went through, and this was one of my areas of responsibility on an oversight basis--I had nothing to do with the writing--the kinds of things that he'd raise in dealing with a problem. He'd analyze it as he went, because he was constantly trying to improve the speechwriting thing, recognizing the enormous importance of Presidential speeches--in terms of public opinion, their effect on other nations, and on Congressmen--that it made a lot of difference. So he was concerned with the content of his speeches.

He was always--sort of like in the PR general sense he was always looking for another PR man, he was always looking for another speechwriter. There were constant requests to find a speechwriter who has the ability to do this or the ability to do that, such as: one who can really organize a speech and get it so it flows and times right for the spoken word. Some of the people that were writing for him, he felt, were good at writing for the written word. They wrote speeches that read well but they didn't speak well, and he wanted speeches that spoke well. That had cheer lines, and had emotional lifts, and suspense, and the kinds of things that you need verbally that you don't always put together the same way in written form. He frequently would go back to the "What we really need is a Ted [Theodore C.] Sorensen. We need somebody like Kennedy had, who could think the

way Kennedy did, and say things the way Kennedy thought, and really produce beautiful, well-organized, highly literate, but highly speakable, speeches."

In addition to being speakable, they had to read well, too, because Presidential speeches are reproduced in substantial form--often with entire text of a major speech--in the press. They need to stand up under the reading test, too. Also, to get someone who had the gift of the turn for an effective phrase of a line that had memorability, that would catch people's imagination. That would not just make the point, but would emphasize it. Punch it home. Zing it, so that the speech had some real effect: that it moved people or excited them, or roused them to action. Whatever the effort was.

As he was concerned, in a general sense, about the staff being good mechanics and good operators, he was also concerned about the speechwriters being skilled craftsmen. Highly literate, intellectual, and all that, but not down to the folks. Gutsy enough. Not emotional enough. Not able to get down to the maybe corny kind of thing that really appeals to people, that grabs people. There was a general pressure over all those years of trying to encourage the existing writers and, at the same time, trying to find potential new writers who had that knack. He'd hear other people's speeches and say, "Find out who wrote that speech, because that's the kind of thing we really need."

I remember in his second State of the Union address, which would have been in 1970, he had an interesting critique of [its] first draft, which was prepared by one of the writers: "It's

absolutely too eloquent and a complete disaster." Which is kind of interesting. Specifically, his point was, "There's not enough substance, there's not enough cheer lines, and there's no organization. We've got to get someone who can put those things in." One of the problems we had in dealing with that [was] that Nixon, as President, was less able and less willing to devote the time to working with the speechwriters. Less than he had been in the campaigns, in terms of giving them real guidance as to not just the basic content of what he wanted to say, but how he wanted to say it. The way he wanted to get it across, so that they had a better feel of what he was working for. I think that was difficult.

RHG: I'm sorry, I was just going to ask on that point: he spent a lot of time working on the speeches, but you're saying that he wouldn't work with the speechwriters very much.

HRH: Right, right. He did work with them, but not as much.... They always were concerned that "If we could just get some time with him. Go over and find out what he's talking about." When he was under pressure he would talk to me, or to Rose [Mary Woods], or [Henry A.] Kissinger, if it was a foreign policy speech--people who were not writers at all--and say, "Tell them I've got to get this and this and this and this into the speech." Well, we'd make notes as best we could and get them to the speechwriters, but that isn't the same for a speechwriter as sitting with the guy and being able to do a little give-and-take of.... So the writer says, "Well, what do you think about this?" And Nixon says, "No, because...." Then they know why it's wrong instead of

just "Don't do that." It was hard to get that kind of time available for them.

Another problem was that speechwriting was hard work for him, and he wasted an awful lot of time just.... Did I get into the dog circling around point...

RHG: Yes, you mentioned that in the first interview.

HRH: ...before? Because that was definitely a factor in the speechwriting thing. He just had to spend a lot of time getting himself into the mood to really get down to the nitty-gritty work of doing the speech. He just procrastinated. So that would slow down the process and make it less efficient.

He took a hand in other people's speeches, particularly [Spiro T.] Agnew's....

[Interruption]

RHG: I think you were just mentioning how the President occasionally worked on some of Agnew's speeches, is the last thing I remember.

HRH: Well, he was interested in Agnew's speeches and he felt that.... A lot of people were outraged at some of the outrageous things Agnew was saying. Some of those were encouraged by the President. Pat Buchanan, who had worked with the President for a long time, wrote a lot of the Agnew stuff. The President felt that it made sense that Agnew could be the low road fighter, hit harder than the President. The President had to stay on the high road and be Presidential. That it was a pretty good one-two punch kind of operation. He felt that Buchanan's stuff with Agnew at least was sharp and specific, to a greater extent. [Input for the President's speeches], he felt, was kind of fuzzy

a lot of the time, and that bothered him. He wanted to make it clearer and that was one of the critiques.

His sort of constantly recurring complaint was, "I have to do all of the work. Nobody else around here can write a speech, so it boils down to, when we get around to the major ones, I have to do it and that's a problem. We need to find someone who can do it." He would experiment with different processes, where you would do a.... Where he wouldn't do any writing at all. He'd give an outline or a concept to the writer and then he'd have the writer write a speech and he'd critique it and have the writer re-write it. Keep going until he got it done. He thought maybe he could the satisfactory speeches in volume out of that technique and that was one approach that he tried at times.

He also tried to convince himself, and successfully to some extent, to take a speech that wasn't what he regarded as just right, and read it anyway, without re-writing it himself and without worrying about making every speech into a major opus, but rather to make do with what he had. Recognizing that most Presidential speeches, other than Inaugurals and State of the Unions maybe, and that sort of thing, are not that strongly noted or remembered by people. Especially the ones that are not covered, are not network television speeches. Those prime time things that he did in Presidential reports to the nation he never backed off to this [extent]. But in the less detailed coverage type speeches, he did get to a point where he was willing to do what he also got to the point of being willing to do in letterwriting, which was to sign letters that other people had

written for him, [which] he knew he could have written better himself. Which was what Eisenhower told him was the mark of a true executive: the man that can sign a letter someone else wrote that he knows he could have written better himself, but forces himself not to take the time and effort, which he doesn't really have available....

RHG: Now, that was very hard for Nixon, wasn't it?

HRH: Very hard. It really was. He had to force himself to do it. He'd go back and forth. "Should I...?" He'd say, "I've got to do this." Then he'd read a speech which, after he did it, he'd say, "That was a lousy speech," or "mediocre speech, and I shouldn't have done it." Then he thinks that's a mistake and he won't do it the next time. Then he cycles back and says, "I have to do that, and I will."

There's no question, in my viewpoint, that the speeches that he did by himself, or did mostly himself, were his superior speeches. I think he was, for his speaking, a better speechwriter than any of the speechwriters. They gave him ideas, there's no question about that, but he did a better job of crafting a speech, partly because none of the writers was a speaker. Writing a speech for someone else, when you don't have to speak it, is different than writing a speech for yourself when you do have to speak it. You, as a speaker, are writing a speech. You're thinking cheer lines and speech emphasis and that kind of thing, where the writer is thinking literary flow. He reads it; he doesn't speak it. So it's different.

An example was a very major speech that he had to give to

the National Junior Chamber of Commerce convention, which I think was in St. Louis. Wherever it was, it was a major speech. It was going to be covered by television and it was the national convention. A huge crowd, Junior Chamber of Commerce, which are young community leaders across the country. People that he wanted to make a strong impression on because it was at the time when we were having the battle with the youth. Having a good reception by young people, even though Chamber of Commerce--not "hippie", but they were young, anyway--was important.

He went round and round on that one. He had Pat Buchanan work on it. He had Ray Price work on it. They'd shift back and forth. One guy would do a draft and then he'd shift to another guy and then he'd work on it, and then he'd say, "Geez, maybe I've just got to do it myself." Then he was agonizing, "Maybe this would be better to do as an off-the-cuff speech. Just not read a speech." Because most of his Presidential speeches he read. He knew them pretty well, the major ones at least, because he had worked on them himself. But he still read them. The TV addresses he read, because it was so important in a Presidential address to the nation, or in a foreign policy related statement, that no phraseology would creep in that might be misinterpreted. How the words were constructed and all did become important. So, they were read. The net [result] on the Junior Chamber speech was that he ended up winging it. He didn't use a written speech, even though there had been a lot of writing done. He had put in an enormous amount of time on it--not in an organized fashion, but on and off--and I think the net result was an absolutely

sensational speech. It was an enormous success. He got a rousing reception, and it was.... I think it showed that if he did it himself, it did come out better. We still couldn't get a standard practice that he would stay with.

RHG: Now, in that case, did he just go to the podium with no text at all, and he'd just...?

HRH: Yeah.

RHG: Of course, he was familiar with all this speechwriting process.

HRH: He'd worked over all those texts and and all the earlier drafts and he had all the ideas in his head. I would imagine that he probably had--I can't remember specifically--but he probably had a page of yellow notes with him, highlight notes, that he probably didn't use. But it was probably stuck in his pocket. And he could have pulled it out if he had wanted to get a refresher on something. As I recall, he didn't use any text at all. That was where he really was at his best. He did that a lot at of times at the little things, the little ceremonies, presentation ceremonies and that sort of thing. Well, Congressional Medal of Honor things. He never read speeches at those. But he did work on a speech before he went. Those he wanted to be very personal, and he'd use a writer for basic research. He'd get the background on the people that were getting the award or the medal or whatever, and maybe some interesting corollary sidelights that he could weave in, but he'd put the thing together.

Did I go into the John Adams...? One of the Adams's family, John Adams and Samuel Adams, John Quincy Adams, the Presidential

Adams family. I've written it somewhere, said it somewhere. It was a fascinating exercise. The heirs down the line, of the Adams Foundation, which was still Adams family, great grandchildren, great-great, or whatever, how far down it went, presented two portraits of Mr. and Mrs. [John Quincy] Adams to the White House. There was a ceremony in the East Room to receive these and acknowledge the presentation and everything. The curator of the Adams Foundation or Adams museum, or whatever it is, prepared a talk. An Adams heir, one of the great-grandsons or something, gave a talk about Adams. Both of them prepared talks that they read. Finishing that, you have probably the two foremost living experts in the world on Adams giving their prepared talks that they read. Then, Richard Nixon steps forward to acknowledge and accept, as President of the United States, and speaks off the cuff, without a prepared text. Talks about anecdotal story material relating to Adams, and when Adams died in the House of Representatives, and Adams's connection with Abraham Lincoln when they had served together in the House as Congressmen. He wove in things that made a very moving, very personal, very scholarly, in its own way, acceptance, and made an enormous impression on these people.

He did a lot of that kind of thing. His toasts at dinners and that sort of thing were in that nature. That was usually, or often, his own research, not.... And the Adams thing was. He had read something the night before. Some book he was reading-- it was a book on Lincoln, I think--that had the Adams connection, which lead him to the background on it. There [was] that kind

of thing. Every time we'd argue that he ought to give more speeches or somebody would argue that what we need is Presidential speeches, he would.... His standard thrust back on that was, "If you'd find me good speechwriters that could do them so I didn't have to spend all the time writing the speeches, then I would do more speeches. Having to do it all myself, it becomes a real problem."

The State of the Union Address in 1971, which would have been, '69-'70-'71, his third State of the Union, he tried what he regarded as a new speechwriting method. It was really a modification of the old one where he had Ray Price, the chief speechwriter, write an initial draft of a speech. Write from scratch, without any guidance. Then Nixon worked on it, himself. Then sent it back to Price with his annotations and comments and so forth. Price re-worked it, sent it back. They'd go through a couple drafts a day that way, back and forth while [the President], in the meantime, could go about his other business, so he didn't have to hole up and concentrate on the speech. That worked out pretty well. The disaster with that one was that he, as was customary, released the text of the speech prior to delivering the address. The big punch thing in that speech was [the] re-organization concept, and that was all leaked before he gave his speech. That infuriated him, so we got into the leak problem, through the speechwriting problem, on that one.

RHG: Did he try that method again?

HRH: Yeah, and he modified it. The problem on that speech, though, was he wasn't happy with the speech when it was finally done, and

after delivery, because he didn't think it had a coherent theme, and the kind of organization that it would have had, if he had written it himself. So, it bothered him, but he did try that approach, in modified ways, in later speechwriting efforts.

We never did get speechwriting down to an accepted and agreed upon easy way to get a speech prepared, and one of my roles in the speechwriting process, especially in the latter part of the first term, was on all major speeches, he would end up.... I would never participate in the speechwriting thing at all, in terms of content, or anything. Assigned the writer and the President would work directly with the writer on everything, not through me. That meant that I knew everything that was going on that was involved, but I didn't know what he was going to say in the speech.

It dawned on him, somewhere along the line, and we'd done it a little in the campaigns before that.... He started using me as a sort of a final draft sounding board. He'd have me sit and listen to what he had decided was his final draft, but before he was locked into it, so that he still could make changes. It was fascinating for me, but I don't think I'd ever presume to get in much to critiquing it. If there was something that was specifically missing or not clear, I'd make a point about that, but that was about it. I did not get into trying to suggest content, additional stuff, or additional approaches to doing it.

RHG: Did you just sit and he would stand in front of you and...?

HRH: He'd sit, and read it.

RHG: Sit down and just read the speech to you?

HRH: He'd sit in his chair and read it.

RHG: And you would make comments? You'd say, "I don't understand that?" or something to...?

HRH: I'd make notes as he was going. Then I'd go back and say, "I think there's a part in the middle there that...", you know.

RHG: Did he do this with others in the White House?

HRH: He did on the foreign policy speeches with Henry. Usually with me there, also. Henry and I, together, would be in there on a number of the foreign policy speeches. It gave him a--it was easier to do that with somebody sitting there, than to read it aloud to himself. Part of what he was doing there was trying to get a feel of how it came through in the spoken form versus the written form, because when you're sitting there writing, you're still just writing it.

RHG: I notice here July 15, 1971, he's giving a speech on the China opening. "As was his usual custom, Nixon read the final draft of the speech to Haldeman shortly before time to deliver it."

HRH: Yeah. That was fairly standard. He constantly kept pushing for getting more heart, more feeling, emotion. More personal. Less factual, less statistical. More inspirational. Uplifting. Those were the things he was looking for, and tended to be critical of the writers on.

RHG: It seems, from seeing these journal entries, that he never got that. He just really did.

HRH: No, never really did. Never to his satisfaction. His line was that he didn't want beautiful prose, he wanted memorable prose. He didn't want it to be literally beautiful. He wanted it to be

memorable in the sense of unforgettable. Making the concept. He kept pushing constantly for more anecdotal material, and they all worked on trying to develop anecdotal things to work into speeches after the main body was there. They'd go back and try to weave anecdotal material in that would highlight it.

RHG: I think you mentioned Dick Moore was particularly good at that.

HRH: Dick Moore was good at that, because he was an old Irish storyteller, and he was good at coming up with that kind of thing. I think that's pretty much the flavor of the way the speechwriting thing went to. There were specific [instances] where things got [into] problem area[s]. They were all really reflections of the same thing. He just never was totally satisfied with what came out. I think with him [that] was inevitable. We could have been there another hundred years, and I don't think we would have ever solved the problem.

RHG: Did he ever try very hard to find a Sorensen?

HRH: Yeah. But never felt that he had. Ray Price came the closest.

RHG: But he expresses great dissatisfaction with Price's work in here [Haldeman's journal].

HRH: On and off, but that was because Price wrote more of the speeches. So he got more of the blame for them. The really good speeches, the ones that Nixon was really satisfied with, were often Price speeches. The Buchanan ones were too tough and too harsh for Nixon, although Buchanan had a lot of lines that Nixon used from time to time. Safire's were too clever. He didn't like the cleverness. Price's were more... Price's tended to be more beautiful speeches, but he worked toward the President's

objective of making them memorable rather than beautiful. Ray did a good job.

RHG: What about some of the others? [John J.] McLaughlin was a speechwriter for a while, I think.

HRH: Yeah, I guess he was. I'm not sure.... He was a second-tier writer. There were a number of them. Ken Khachigian, who was writing for Reagan, was one the speechwriting staff. Mort [Lyndon K.] Allin did some speechwriting work.

RHG: John Andrews, I think, wrote a....

HRH: Johnny Andrews did a lot of speechwriting work.

RHG: He was a very young man.

HRH: [S.] Bruce Herschensohn did some. There were a number of people in the second tier. The main triumverate.... Well, and then, Ray Gergen.

RHG: Dave [David] Gergen.

HRH: Dave Gergen became the head speechwriter. He was Price's assistant. When Price left, Gergen took over as the leader of the speechwriting group.

RHG: I think Price stayed through the end.

HRH: Yeah, I guess you're right. He did. But...

RHG: You know, I think there were two....

HRH: ...maybe Price moved out of speechwriting into....

RHG: I think there were two different staffs.

HRH: He was the coordinator, but not the writer, or something?

RHG: Well, Price, for a while, did set himself aside a bit in the way that Ehrlichman had done at the end of his term. To be someone who thought a little more about philosophy for the

administration. I think trying to be Nixon's philosopher, you mentioned yesterday.

HRH: Um hmm.

RHG: I'm trying to remember the staff set up for the White House and my memory is that there may have been two writing staffs, at least at whatever time I was looking at the staff structure for it. One was a speechwriting staff, and the other was a statement staff.

HRH: Right.

RHG: I'm wondering if Gergen was the head of the second.

HRH: That could be, that could be. Another facet of the writing was letterwriting; there was also a letterwriting staff. There's an enormous amount of Presidential correspondence that has to go out, in response to incoming correspondence. There was a big staff doing that. Originally we started that by trying to get someone from the State Department to come over, because the President felt the people trained in the State Department stuff had the gift of Presidential type language--the sort of exalted language--that would be appropriate for letters from the President to individual people.

We had a fellow named Noble Melencamp, from the State Department, that came in and did an enormous amount of that, and was in charge of the letterwriting thing. The original guy on that was Larry [Lawrence] Eagleburger, who then became a senior assistant to Kissinger and a major foreign policy guy. Kissinger stole Eagleburger away from me right in the very early days, but he had been brought over from State as the chief letterwriter.

That was the thought with him.

Nixon was very much aware of the need for doing those things right, and had his ideas and his critiques of them constantly. The statements, the speeches, the messages to organizations and general correspondence to people.

RHG: One of the things that I notice, going through [the journal], on the speechmaking is that Nixon changes his mind from time to time about how he feels about speaking to live crowds.

HRH: Right.

RHG: Can you talk about that?

HRH: Well, it's one of those things that [is] part of that constant evaluating and re-evaluating the overall task of dealing with public opinion. How is the most effective way to communicate? The argument, of course, was that a speech to a live audience is a waste of time because you're talking to a few hundred or at most a few thousand people. You have a major impact on them, but what happens from there on? You argue that if you do it on television you can only do it so much and.... What it boiled down to is you've got to do a little bit of all of it.

RHG: And every.... This one entry I was looking at is a day Nixon felt the other way. It's February 2, 1972. "Nixon says he wants to meet with more live crowds. The people are sick of TV." Now, the next day he'd want to be back on TV, probably.

HRH: Yeah, yeah. That's the kind of thing.... It's a reaction to something that... He was sensitive to the, as we've talked about, to the overexposure on TV, and the concern that TV is a double-edged sword. It gives you the opportunity to reach a lot

of people, but how often do they want to be reached?

RHG: Maybe we could just look at the Congressional relations side of public relations just briefly. I actually just stumbled on an item here. A good way to open, only because it concerns the Congress and speechmaking. It raises a curious kind of question. At any rate, this is March 1972. Nixon has given a busing speech. In the speech he asks the American people to write to Congress and tell them how they feel about busing. So, after the speech is over, he turns to Colson, and he asks Colson to write letters to the members of Congress. What kind of an operation was that?

HRH: OK, this isn't really.... Doesn't.... It relates to the Congressional thing, but what that is is a different subject [that] it's worth spending a few minutes on, which is the whole follow-up concept. The point, in this whole public opinion thing, of not just giving a Presidential speech and then walking away and leaving the issue at that. But having prepared follow-up; giving back-up material out to editorial writers and that sort of thing. Getting public response generated, in various ways.

By March of '72 Colson was in a position where theoretically, at least, he had the ability to mobilize public action and reaction. And it wasn't that Colson would write letters. It was that Colson's troops, Colson's apparatus would cause letters to be sent to Congress. In other words, Colson would contact the Association of--this is the busing speech--take the people that would be opposed to busing, the various groups of

people that were opposed to busing. Or ethnic groups or trade unions or whatever it might be. Get those people to get their people to respond by writing to their Congressmen.

RHG: I see. That's quite different.

HRH: And, uh, so it was a mobilization of support, or expressions of support, in order to get things to happen. The point there would be that Nixon having, in the speech, asked for people to write Congress, the worst thing that could happen as a result of that would be for Congress to say, "The President asked for letters, but we didn't get any." So what he's doing there is using whatever means that he hopefully had at his disposal to cause or encourage or accelerate the response level, so there would be some appropriate response coming in.

We [also] had letterwriting kinds of things we used in the campaign and carried some of them forward into the White House, through the Republican National Committee and party organizations in the states, that sort of thing, that were ladies, and men, but a lot of senior citizen ladies were willing to volunteer to do letterwriting. They'd write individual, thoughtful letters responding to something that came up. It was a stronger form of response than form letters, but somewhat along the same kind of line. At least it wasn't printing an ad in the paper that you just signed your name to and sent in, it was a little more personalized than that, but Nixon was very strong on the concept of follow-up.

That sort of ties to that thing, [as] I said, in terms of success, [that his attitude was] very "Don't let down". Way back

in the fall of '69, when the Vietnam demonstrations were stirring up heavily, Hubert Humphrey made a substantial statement supporting Nixon's policy in Vietnam, which was highly significant. Humphrey having been his opponent in the election and the standardbearer of the opposing party. Nixon, in his usual political mechanics way, told me to get a hundred telegrams sent to Humphrey congratulating him on his supportive remarks on Vietnam.

RHG: Yes, I've seen that.

HRH: We did. We'd use some of these letterwriting people. I don't know by then.... No, we hadn't really put into organizational form that "Silent American Majority", but one of the things those people did was write letters to their Congressmen, send wires, things like that. Both in support--commendatory letters to people that were supporting the President and accusatory letters, condemnatory letters to those that weren't.

RHG: Who were these people and how did you bring them into your follow-up?

HRH: Oh, there were several.... They were leftovers from the campaign. They were a part of.... When you set up volunteer organizations for the campaign, that was one of the activities you set up for volunteers.

RHG: I see.

HRH: This was sort of the remnants of that. The [Republican] National Committee, I think, tried to maintain that kind of thing. We had political mailing lists that could be used for the support things. You'd hit organizations. The American Legion, for

instance, as a huge national organization, would be strongly supportive of the President's Vietnam policy. So we'd contact the American Legion and ask them to contact their local posts and get their people to respond to the White House, to the Congress, and so forth.

Letters to the editors, we had a whole "letters to the editors" program, that was an apparatus of, again, volunteers who would watch the editorials and the treatment of various issues and so forth in their papers, and respond to those with letters to the editors [which] got printed a lot. Again, a lot of the letters to the editors that you read in your paper come from that kind of thing. Not just from us, but from lots of organizations that, when something comes out that concerns them, whether it's the National Organization of Women, or whatever, they get their troops to mobilize and write a lot of letters to the editor. Because they do get printed and that shows an expression of public reaction, support or opposition, to something.

RHG: Was there ever a problem with the fact that the power of such a follow-up, I would think, could possibly be diminished if the apparatus were too blatant?

HRH: Yeah. It would be diminished, but it still has an effect. The apparatus on a lot of those things is very blatant. They do run ads--organizations run full-page ads in the newspaper saying, "Cut this out, sign it and mail it to your Congressman." It's a printed thing that says, "Dear Congressman, I oppose House Bill 738. Please vote against it." Sign and you're set. It's like circulating petitions. It still mobilizes expressions of public

support. They do have an effect on Congressmen; they have an effect on newspapers.

We had some organizations during the campaign--I think some of them carried over during the administration--that were set up to make telephone calls to radio stations and television stations, commenting, responding, reacting to the news treatment of incidents. Most of those, they were told how to do it and mobilized to do it, as volunteer groups, but then were left to their own initiative to decide when to do it and what to say, and on what basis. Which was the more effective way of doing it than giving them a standard form to send in.

RHG: How did word go out at the appropriate times that now is the time to do it?

HRH: I'm not exactly sure. There were ways of doing it, and I don't know what they were exactly. I don't remember what they were. I guess I probably knew at the time. I would guess that they were carryovers from the mechanisms of the campaign organization that would be available for doing that.

In the fall of '69, after the Asian trip and the moon landing, which was an enormous success.... The moon landing, of course, enervated the entire world and got them really charged up. It was absolutely fantastic, because we took the trip around the world right afterwards. It was amazing to see the reaction everywhere we went. All through Asia and Europe and everywhere else. The President after that was very distressed because there hadn't been a consistent follow-up. People didn't seize success and uplift and take advantage of it and use it and build from it.

They simply said, "Gee, that was great, wasn't it?", and let it go at that.

[The President] had a sense, that other people didn't seem to have, of "Take advantage of your pluses. Don't just relax and enjoy them. Try to accelerate them, and expand on them." and that was what the whole follow-up thing really was about, on the positive side. On the negative side, it was to express dissatisfaction with things that went the wrong way, or somebody that made a speech covering things in the wrong direction. You'd follow up and let them know that they.... The follow-up thing was primarily positive. It was basically various ways of trying to generate and accelerate positive reaction, and make it felt, and have an effect, to capitalize on those things.

RHG: Was the follow-up idea something that began with the beginning of the Presidency?

HRH: No, it began in the campaigns. We had....

RHG: What I meant, it was there, it was something begun in the campaign?

HRH: Oh, yeah. Started.... Oh, yeah. Absolutely.

[End side one]

[Begin side two]

HRH: ...you had sort of started with Congress and....

RHG: Right. And actually, I read the wrong thing, but it turned into a very interesting discussion.

HRH: It went off the track.

RHG: There was something--let me just look at the list--that was related, that might be more closely related to follow-up than

something else that I don't really feel I understand. That's the idea of "attack".

HRH: OK. The attack thing was more internal. The follow-up was using external resources: people on the outside. Well, it wasn't really. It was internal follow-up to utilize those outside resources. We had an attack group set up that was supposed to work on making things uncomfortable for people that were taking opposing positions. I don't remember a lot of specifics, and I've probably got some notes [in the journal] that will give me a--spring out some of them. Nixon wanted an attack group set up. He wanted the, and this is part of the political thing, that in a campaign you do.... There is a negative campaign that goes on, as well as the positive [campaign]. The candidate conducts a positive campaign stating his position, and to some degree, at the high level, he attacks the opposition, also. But, you also try to generate attack activity at the non-candidate level, where you're challenging the opponent at all times. Where you're making sure that his slips and his faux pas are brought to the maximum attention and built as much as possible. You try to create opportunities for him to make slips and faux pas. Putting hecklers into meetings to ask him questions that are hard for him to have to answer. Nixon was, to some degree, a perpetrator, through his organization, of this kind of thing. He was also very much a victim of it, from [what] was perpetrated by the other side. So, it isn't something that was unique with us at all.

[I'm] trying to find some examples, maybe, of the attack

kind of thing. There's one here, in June of 1970, where the President's saying to get everyone cranked up regarding CBS's plan to give the Democrats free time to counteract the time the President gets on TV. This relates very definitely to the follow-up thing. It's the same kind of thing. It's mobilizing external public pressure. A reaction to something unfavorable that's about to happen. CBS had decided.... The Democrats were demanding free time to counteract the time the President got. Our argument was, that's absurd. That the President is speaking as President of the United States and not as a partisan person. Free time to oppose him is not required. He was elected to lead the country, and this is one of his ways to lead it. So we set up to try and launch a wave of adverse reaction to CBS. You know--"How dare you do this?" To encourage editorials opposing it, to get letters and public commentary and all that saying, "This isn't right."

RHG: Here's one where Nixon wants the White House to continue attack on the press, to erode their credibility. Just a general purpose.

HRH: That was something he wanted all the time, and that was more a wish than a command, because there wasn't.... What can you do to erode it? You can encourage people to write things and say things and encourage our partisans, Congressmen, other people, to attack the press. Of course, Agnew was the leader of the attack on the press. He ginned up some stuff that had a very strong effect in his attacks on the press. Other people picked up the cudgel as a result of that. People that had that same feeling.

That whole area, I think, has accelerated very substantially since the Nixon time, and I think you see now how much more of the media, anti-media kind of feeling. Media credibility has dropped enormously from what it was at the time that we were in the White House. I think a lot of that is the result of....

You could stimulate some of these things, but you also have to.... There has to be some substance to begin with. People won't attack unless they believe in the attack. You're motivating people to express feelings that they already have. You're not, you're not fabricating the feelings to begin with. The attack thing also was reflected in a sense on the personal basis by this tendency that when Hugh Sidey wrote a lousy column, or an inaccurate column, or something was.... "Don't let Hugh Sidey on the plane." Or, "Freeze Dan [Daniel] Schorr out because he's hitting us on our parochial schools position", or whatever it might be. There was a lot of that sort of thing. Some of it we could do something effective about. Most of it we couldn't.

I see here in '72, in April, he wanted to mount an administration-wide attack on the national press, and praise the local press. Well, what he's saying there is, "Get people to pick up the Agnew line, and get administration spokesmen--the Cabinet, and sub-Cabinet people, people like that that are out making speeches--to do that." A couple of months later he's saying, "We should move away from attacks on the press, because they're ideologically against us, but we make a mistake when we act personally against them, rather than on the issues." And that was the mistake that Agnew and Reagan were making was they

were doing it as a personal thing, rather than substantively on the issues. We should attack them for factual inaccuracy, but not attack them on just personal ideological grounds.

In April of '72 he was saying, "Mount the attack." In June of '72 he was saying, "We should move away from attacks on the press." In August of '72 he says, "Bob Semple's written a New York Times story that the White House has issued orders to stop attacking the press." He thinks that's counterproductive, therefore we'd better continue the attack on the press to erode their credibility. So, a lot of this is pressure venting. It's like a lot of what you hear on the White House tapes when you listen to Nixon in meetings with some of us, and probably most blatantly with Colson, where he's just venting his spleen. Somebody's written a lousy article in the paper that morning, and he's not real happy about it, and he's saying, "We've got to do this and do that."

I see that in September of '72 he wants Pat Buchanan and "Mort" [Lyndon] Allin to establish a blacklist of reporters and publishers. I don't know whether it is, but that may be the famous enemies list that became so much of a factor in the Congressional hearings and stuff. Then, a couple of months later he wants Time and Newsweek embargoed and Sidey given no backgrounders. Point out that "Face the fact that the press are our enemies. Let's use them as enemies." That's going back to the old concept of finding some enemies and making use of them as useable enemies. "Get out that 80 of 89 in the press corps supported [George] McGovern." The kinds of things that come out

in books and studies about the press that make it difficult for them. In January he was reacting, "Nobody's to talk to Hugh Sidey because Time magazine put Marlon Brando on the cover on Inauguration week," instead of using the cover for Inaugural coverage.

But, those are sort of petty, spite type reactions that I think prove nothing more or less, really, than the President is human. [Laughter] Doesn't like people kicking him. Reacts to them by saying, "Kick 'em back."

RHG: Can you evaluate the follow-up and attack procedures? Were they effective?

HRH: My opinion always was, at the time, that they weren't very effective. That it was probably not a bad idea to do some of that to maintain the pressure, and that they probably had some effect. And some of them, there's no question, were effective. The November 3rd "Moratorium" speech in '69, which generated an enormous input of telegrams that night, we moved quickly on follow-up on that. We worked hard to get out the fact of the thing. We had to force the story. The press wasn't interested in covering the fact, and we took some very positive moves to force it. We had a very memorable photograph where we piled the telegrams on the President's desk, and had the press in--the press photographers--let them come in to get a picture of the President the next day, going through these telegrams, that were running 95 to 1 in favor of the President's position. Then we realized we had something going. There was some national momentum.

We followed up with reports from Western Union offices around the country, saying they'd never been jammed up so heavily before in history, and things like that that were to keep the story going, of the fact that there was this strong public outpouring of support for the President. Then we set up the Silent American Majority organization. They had little lapel pins and they moved ahead with various things to try and capitalize, maintain the momentum on that. And that, I think, did have some effect as a follow-up activity.

The attack activity had some effect, and we saw the effect at times. There was no question that Agnew got to some of these people, to the point where Walter Cronkite even went out to Omaha or someplace and gave a half hour speech dealing with his own reaction to Agnew attacking the press. It put those people on the defensive, and by being on the defensive made them think twice at times, I think, before they jumped with some of the really irresponsible things.

So, I guess I would summarize it: I think there was some effect; I don't think it was anything like the effect that we would have liked to have had. But I also don't think that what we did had anything like the force that we would have liked to have had. It's a tough effort, at best, to try and get that kind of thing going on an ad hoc, quick crank-up basis. I think it's the kind of thing where, why not do it? It doesn't cost anything, doesn't hurt anything. It may do some good, rather than something that you can measure, that it accomplished these specific objectives.

RHG: Although in the case of Agnew, and I know that's a very unusual case, but as a result of what Agnew was doing, some time later, Nixon had to meet with all the college presidents and they were all afraid and the student bodies had become politicized.

HRH: That wasn't because of Agnew. The student bodies were politicized because of Vietnam and because of the weak backbones of the college presidents who didn't have the guts to stand up to their students and run their colleges. And that was long before Nixon. That was happening when I was on the Board of Regents of the University of California and we were having.... One of the last major acts I participated in as a regent was getting rid of Clark Kerr as President of the University, who was a great mediator and arbitrator, and not a leader. The times called for leadership on the [campuses]. An awful lot of the university administrations just collapsed their own authority and let the kids take over and run the campus. You had the inmates running the zoo, which is a little absurd, and totally defeats the purpose of the academic free marketplace of ideas. Totally eliminates the opportunity of most of the people on the campuses who were there paying a lot of money to try and get an education.

RHG: All right. Now to Congressional relations, if you could describe that operation a bit.

HRH: OK. [Bryce] Harlow was the chief Congressional liaison person, and was responsible, generally, in the White House for Congressional liaison. Congressional liaison is obviously an important aspect of the President's dealing with public opinion and with reaction to what he's doing, because the members of

Congress as individuals and the houses of Congress as bodies are both makers of public opinion, because they have voices that are heard wide and far and frequently, and are users of public opinion in that they are acutely sensitive to indications that public opinion is going one way or another. Therefore, they mold public opinion and are molded by public opinion, both.

Plus, of course, as President, the support of Congress is a vital necessity to carrying forward any Presidential program, if for no other reason than Congress controls the purse strings. You don't have any money to spend until Congress gives it to you. As Reagan is seeing and as the whole "Contra" affair was a result of a President versus Congress. That's one of the arguments that Ollie [Oliver] North is making now, that he's being indicted on criminal charges for his participation in a Congressional versus Presidential policy battle, and there's some merit to that argument. It's vitally important.

President Nixon recognized that importance. He had been a Congressman and a Senator and Vice President, therefore President of the Senate for eight years, so he had a lot of experience and a lot of background on Congress. He was not a creature of the Congress in the sense that a Lyndon Johnson, for instance, was. Jack [John] Kennedy was not either, even though he had been a Senator. He was a Congressman too, wasn't he?

RHG: That's right.

HRH: Yeah, he was a Congressman at the same time Nixon was, and then went over to the Senate just as Nixon did. Yet neither Nixon nor Kennedy was really a Congressional person, in the sense that, as

I said, that Lyndon Johnson was, and that Jerry [Gerald] Ford certainly was. Ronald Reagan certainly is not. Jimmy [James] Carter certainly was not. But Nixon and Kennedy, although not Congressional people, were much more attuned to and had much more feel for Congress and its importance than Carter or Reagan, who have had no exposure to Congress, had. Although as governors they had to deal with their state legislatures.

The White House Congressional liaison office is a lobbying office, basically, to try to lobby White House programs through Congress. To try and get the Congress to pass the bills that the President wants passed. The office works in all kinds of ways to do that. They service Congressmen. One of their functions is to provide services, which are very small and seem petty, but very important to Congressmen. Such services as getting a special White House tour for an important constituent, or for the Congressman himself, for his family, or something like that.

Making sure that Congressmen are properly fanny-patted: invited to White House dinners and other White House functions. Participate in signing ceremonies on bills in which those Congressmen were interested, or upon which votes in their district depended. Getting them exposure to the President. Opportunity to present their case to the President and to appear to be presenting their case to the President. In other words, getting publicity for Congressmen vis-a-vis their relations with the President. Setting up and organizing and maintaining a series of Congressional leadership meetings. Meetings with the opposition leadership and meetings with, in our case, the

Republican leadership.

Lots of little things like that to keep doing. Plus, hearing Congressmen's complaints and desires and trying to deal with them, at the White House level, to the extent that they could be dealt with at the White House level. And making known to Congressmen the President's complaints and desires as related to what Congress could or shouldn't do in moving forward.

So, a very important relational direction, and Harlow was absolutely superb at it. The fault to be found was that he was too good at it, I guess you could argue. Was arguing too strongly for trying to do the things that he felt were important in maintaining Congressional relations. As with the speechwriters, and with other people--the so-called PR people, the press relations people, and so on--the President had constantly, coming and going, dissatisfactions with the Congressional office. Any time a Congressman came out against us on something, the President felt "Harlow's people should have handled that." Also, he reacted negatively to the instant reaction of the Congressional office [which] was, "Use the President to keep Congress happy." The President's view was that the White House Congressional office should be finding ways for other people to keep Congress happy, without using the President.

Bryce's reaction, when we needed three more votes on a close call vote, was, "The President should call the three swing Senators, and say, 'I'm counting on you' and all that." The President's reaction was, "I can do that, but I can only do it so many times, and pretty soon the guid pro quos start setting in,

and I'm not going to be effective. So, don't fire that bullet unless you have to." His argument was, "Get their constituents to lobby them for it. Get their Governors, get their political backers, get their financial people. Get the interest groups within their states upon whom they're dependent to put the pressure on them. Don't always just come to the President and say (that's the easy way out), 'Call these ten Senators and get them to do it.'" The hard way is, find some other people to call those ten Senators who will have equal influence on them, or maybe greater than the President. Because the Senators, they like being called by the President and all that, but also they know why the President's calling. Most of them, especially the senior ones, are not unduly influenced by a lot of those calls. It was always the thing in getting ready for a vote, call the Senators, have a group over for breakfast, do these kinds of things. The President's view was, "Find other ways to do that." That was where the problems arose there, and the pressure was always one way from the Congressional department and the other way from the President. It worked out. We did a good job, generally, of setting those things up.

Bryce was a sensitive guy, and overreacted sometimes to the President's overreaction to [his] efforts. That would bother him, and he'd feel he wasn't wanted, and he had to deal with making that clear. Of course, Bryce was dealing with this whole herd of prima donnas up on the Hill. He had to float all that kind of stuff. I see things that arose, the President hitting me on.... Hugh Scott, who [was] the Republican leader in the

Senate: "Seems to be going out of his way to oppose the White House and complain about the White House in every way he can. What are we doing to work that out?" Well, a lot of it was ego massaging. You did need to keep doing a lot of the things that Harlow wanted us to do. But the President always wanted us to try and do other things.

Also, the President did not have an overwhelming level of respect for all of the members of Congress. He felt that some of them should be taken on hard and dealt with as befitted their status, their lack of loyalty, and all that kind of thing. So, we had to balance that. [We] had to alternate, I guess, between the carrot and the stick.

RHG: I notice in here that Hugh Scott is roughly handled on occasion.

HRH: Yeah.

RHG: John Ehrlichman, in his book, called Hugh Scott "a hack." Did the President feel that strongly?

HRH: I don't think so. I think the President actually had a higher regard for Hugh, but Hugh was a pain in the neck a lot of the time. He was, as those people tend to become, a sort of pompous, self-important fellow, and you had to do this massaging of the ego stuff with him a lot. There were some hack.... He was an old-time Pennsylvania politico and that may qualify for Ehrlichman's definition of hack. To some degree, I can understand that.

But you've got to recognize, which we didn't, sufficiently, in my view (we being people like me in the White House staff), the role of Congress, the Senators and the Congressmen, the

individuals in Congress, and the problem that they have. They're up for re-election. They've got to deal with constituents. They've got to maintain appearances. I have to say that I share Ehrlichman's rather low view of Congress in general, but that's a dangerous thing to do because you're throwing everybody into the same boat, and there are obviously some people in Congress that are outstandingly good people. Some are outstandingly bad. And most of them are in the middle. As I've said before, [that] is true with any group.

I know in the mid-year 1970, June of 1970, we.... The President really blasted....

RHG: Here's an attack on a group of liberal dissident Republicans.

HRH: That's it. Where is it?

RHG: It's December 10, 1969. "A despicable group."

HRH: Yeah, OK. That's the thing I was going to pick up on a little bit. This resulted, in December, of.... Several of us senior White House staff people were coerced by Harlow into.... He said, "The people in the Congress need to know you guys who are around the President. You ought to humanize yourselves with them. You need to spend time with them." Well, I resisted that very strongly, because you can get totally absorbed with that. You become a conduit, and they're calling you all the time, and you can't refuse to take their calls. It poses a real problem. He did get us to go up.... There was a bunch of the liberal Republicans who were a dissident group, in a sense, within the Republican group, and Harlow wanted us to meet with them. Try and allay some of their fears. He felt we were good, decent

human beings and if they just had a chance to deal with us face to face, we could calm some of the opposition.

I told the President about this meeting afterwards. I had found it a very.... I didn't enjoy the meeting at all. They seemed to me like it was a bunch of political hacks complaining about non-important issues that weren't really valid, anyway. Taking a lot of time to sit around and gab and not getting anything done, which was my general reaction to Congress. The President, when I gave him this report, his comment was, "Well, that's a really despicable group of people, anyway." That was his view. He identified some of [them as] being especially bad, some of the others as being just plain dumb and confused, and some others as being not so bad, but not so good either. He wasn't very.... [The President] was really displeased that we had gone to the meeting and thought that was a waste of our time, which I was inclined to agree with.

I think we probably needed to do that kind of thing more than we recognized that we did. It's unfortunate that you can't set up the liaison people to handle liaison and let them do it, and let the people [like me] that were mechanics within the system stay there and do your mechanics work, and not have to do the out-front relational work, also. The problem is that you become, eventually, perceived as being very close and therefore influential and powerful, and you get all this baloney about me as the second most powerful man in the world and all that kind of stuff, which is absurd. But, these people start believing that that's the case, and then you have to deal with that perception

of you that they hold. It is a problem.

I did not have, and still don't have, much respect for Congress. I have respect for the system, and I guess Congress is a necessary flaw in the system [Laughter], from my biased viewpoint. That is part of what makes the system work in that it's a check and balance type of function. I think that Congress is so much more negative than positive that it destroys more than it constructs, and gets in the way of more than it facilitates. I'm a facilitator and a "getting things done" type rather than a ponderer and weigher and careful balancer, and Congress's role is pondering, weighing, and careful balancing. So, I'm personally constitutionally different than the kind of people that find themselves in Congress, and like being in Congress, and therefore it's hard for me to deal with them. For that reason, it's important to have Bryce Harlows and Bill Timmons and Ken Belieu and people like that that we had, that know how to deal with Congress, who are willing and able to do the shmoozing. Lyndon Johnson was the master shmoozer of them all, and that sort of thing.

Nixon was not a master shmoozer. So, he needed more help than Johnson did in Congressional relations. He worked hard at it. He did a good job--Nixon did--of dealing with the leadership, on both sides, and he had, [for instance], a very good working relationship with Mike Mansfield, the Democratic leader in the Senate. He also had a strong level of trust and confidence in Mansfield, in terms of confidentiality and in terms of judgement. He did not have that view of a lot of Congressmen

and Senators, on either side, either the Republican or Democratic side. He felt comfortable, and he did, keep Mansfield apprised of most of the secret things that we were doing in terms of Vietnam negotiations, troop withdrawals, the plan to invade Cambodia (the incursion into Cambodia), the bombing kinds of things, because he knew that Mansfield was a man of total honor who would not violate the confidences. He did not know that about very many other people in the Congress, on either side.

A Congressman's political nature causes him to have to, apparently compulsively, tell people everything he knows. Make sure that they think that he knew things before anybody else did. So, when you tell a Congressman something that you expect to be kept confidential, you find that it is not. That's a problem. There is a conflict between the executive and the legislative. It's probably good. Adversarial relationships tend to provide counterbalances that are worthwhile. We had, in mid-'70, a discussion--Ehrlichman, [Donald] Rumsfeld and I--on the Congressional relations problem: the concerns that the President had and that we had. We did have problems. Every White House has problems in dealing with the Congress. And they're supposed to. We figured out a program that we thought might make some sense, that might work, that we then discussed with the President, and he seemed responsive to, which was the concept of the separation of the two branches of government as provided in the Constitution. Rather than our going directly to Congress, that we should take our case to the people--sell the people--and through the people to the Congress, rather than trying to sell

our programs directly to the Congress. Stop catering to the Congressmen and dealing with them directly and trying to keep them all happy and doing all these little things that I was talking about that we felt we had to do, or that Harlow and his office felt we had to do. Rather than doing that, to downgrade the White House liaison office, downgrade our efforts to maintain and coddle the Congressmen and so on. Take each bill that was going to Congressmen, deal with it on a pragmatic basis where our people in the White House and/or the Departmental people for the area responsible for that bill would become the project manager for getting that bill through Congress, and start doing it with a massive public opinion program directed to the people that would, in turn, bring pressure to bear on the Congress to support it. We thought this was a better way to handle Congressional relations and the President was pleased with it.

It never really got going that way. It sort of became a secondary part of the Congressional relations thing, rather than a substitute for Congressional relations. We kept talking through that period about ways to try and deal with Congress, and a few months later, I know that Senator [Howard] Baker and Senator [Henry] Bellmon and Senator [Robert] Dole came in to meet with the President to tell him that there were very poor White House staff relations with the people that were the "good guys" in Congress: the people like them. They regarded themselves as the good guys. The pro-Nixon men who were carrying the water for the President in the Senate. And they essentially were. Henry Bellmon certainly was. Howard Baker to some extent was, and Dole

to some extent was. At that meeting Dole made the point that he had never even met John Ehrlichman. Here he was, one of the leaders of the administration's causes in the Senate, and he didn't even know the guy who was directing all these bills.

The President's natural response to that was, as I could have predicted if I'd have known what they were going to talk about, he overreacted. Got all cranked up for all kinds of ways that we've got to cure this. "We've got to do something because these guys are our troops in Congress and we've got to set up open lines where these people know that they can reach Haldeman, Ehrlichman, [George] Shultz, Kissinger, whoever they need to, whenever they want to." So we got into this with the President, went over it. Had me meet with the Senators later. The problem there was that I met with these three guys, and the three of them totally disagreed as to what the problem was. One of them thought this was the problem; another thought that was the problem; another thought something else was the problem. The problem is endemic and systemic, and there's nothing you can do about it. It's there, and it's going to be a problem. You've got to deal with it as it goes along. You can't just solve it. We kept having discussions about how to solve it and I don't think we ever got as far as we would have liked to have gotten. I know we never got as far as the Congressional people wanted us to get.

We talked a little earlier about Nixon's feeling in the end of 1970 that Congress was leaderless and fallen apart, and that Rockefeller and Reagan were the only leaders out in the country.

The only strong governors in the [Republican] party. The President was really the only source of strength and that we should get this point out and make the point. There was some feeling that that was true, that there had been.... The President lamented the fact that, Mansfield excepted, there were not the old time leaders in Congress that there had been. Eisenhower had Lyndon Johnson as the Democratic leader in the Senate. Johnson was an enormous asset to Eisenhower, as the opposition leader in the Senate, because he was able to.... He would sit down with Eisenhower and understand what he was trying to do and then help him do it. He was a patriot and an American before he was a Democrat, and he tried to help get at least some of the programs through, and to deal with some of the negative problems that arose on the opposition side. Mansfield did somewhat the same thing--a lot of the same thing--with Nixon. He carried a lot of water for us on the other side of the aisle in the Senate. But he did not have.... He wasn't the outgoing, pusher, aggressive leader type that Johnson was, so was not the asset, in that sense, that Senator Johnson had been to President Eisenhower.

Everett Dirksen was a towering leader on our side in the Senate, but he died while Nixon was President, and we had Hugh Scott succeeding him as the Republican leader. Hugh Scott didn't even begin to hold a candle to Dirksen in terms of strength of leadership and value, therefore, to the White House. The old Speakers like Sam [Samuel] Rayburn were replaced by far less--by [Carl] Albert, people like that--that were just not the caliber

of men and the caliber of leaders and the caliber of political, astute people that we had had in earlier times. At least that's what Nixon felt, and I certainly felt so, too. Nixon did do a lot of things to try and deal with it. He went along with the things that Bryce and others would come up with as means of dealing with this sort of thing, and the regular leadership.... Regular meetings with the Republican leadership, regular breakfasts with the Democratic leadership, regular social functions that we'd get the people in for. Go up on the Hill for meetings with the Chowder and Marching Society, his old group in the Congress. Tried to do things to keep the relationship as open and as good as possible. I think they had, like all of our opinion things, mixed effect. They did some good for some time, but you have to keep doing them, and we didn't keep doing them as much as you probably had to to make it work well. So, there we were.

I know, toward the end of the time that we were there, Ehrlichman developed the feeling the President wasn't doing enough himself to maintain his Congressional relations, and pushed for more aggressive Presidential activity within the thing. Up to the time I left they were still trying to figure out how to handle dealings with Congress, and at that point it had become much more vital because the Ervin Committee was about to do the Watergate investigation, and that then expanded, after I was gone, into the Rodino Committee doing the impeachment hearings, and other committees doing other hearings in presumably Watergate-related kinds of things. Ultimately maybe [because of]

the lack of earlier, sounder relations, [the President] ended up with certainly not much of strength to lean on in Congress, except for a few super loyalists like Chuck [Charles] Wiggins in the House and, I guess, a few of them still in the Senate, who carried the Nixon flag as long as they could. I'm not sure, that no matter what we had done, things would have been much different, in that I think the Congressional people are essentially political animals [who] in their view, have to bend with the wind, and sense the political flow, and go along with it. And I think they do. So, the valid part of our job, I think, was influencing the Congressmen in terms of creating as much flow as we could, [which] they would then feel compelled to go along with.

RHG: Just one last point. You mentioned that the problem that Harlow's office had was similar to what happened with the Cabinet officers, I think, in that he tended to regard the Congress as his constituency, and then he himself acted as a conduit for Congressional opinion to the President. The President wanted him to sell the programs to the Congress, and that never got going from the Harlow office.

HRH: No, that isn't fair. It did get going. He did, very definitely, do that. He did both. It wasn't that he never did the selling of the President's programs to Congress. It was that he did that, but in addition to doing that, and I think rightly so--not from the President's viewpoint, but now, looking back at it with the benefit of hindsight--I think Harlow was right in really considering that he had two constituencies. That he had to

represent the President to the Congress, but he also had to represent the Congress to the President.

I think any of those representations, almost, when you're dealing with opinions and trying to influence people, they all work that way. I think that's the point in our ombudsman type things, the Colson-type thing, dealing with interest groups, and that sort of thing. You represent the White House to the interest group, but you must also represent the interest group back to the White House. Because all those things work on a quid pro quo basis. The Press Secretary and the information guy, Klein, represent the White House to the media, but they've also got to represent the media's needs back to the White House, and the White House does need to be sensitive to the media's needs. The media is an institution that's there. You cannot wish it away. You have to figure out how to deal with it. The same with Congress, the same with interest groups across the country, same with the political constituency itself: the total populace.

We recognized that, maybe not sufficiently. I don't know. I think that we tried to deal with both sides of those issues, and recognize that you had to deal with both sides, deal with them both ways. I'm sure, from the external viewpoint, we didn't recognize it sufficiently. From the internal viewpoint, I'm not so sure we fell too far short. Because you can't.... Your ultimate goal has got to be to get done what you're there to get done, not to make Congressmen happy. You're only making Congressmen happy as a means to your end, which is to get the Congressmen to do what you want them to do.

RHG: Just a couple of last items regarding Harlow's successor, Bill Timmons. February 1973: "Timmons is a Harlow without the Harlow gift of mystique." [You] talk about getting Ehrlichman and Kissinger involved in Congressional relations. Then, March 20th, the last entry in this group: "Timmons won't do as head of Congressional liaison. He gives no guidance to Congressional leaders. Does not develop and sell a PR plan to the Congressional leaders."

HRH: I don't know whether that was my view or the President's view that was recorded there at that time. I think that (A) Harlow got more credit vis-a-vis Timmons than he deserved, and (B) Timmons got less credit vis-a-vis Harlow than he deserved. I think that Timmons was a younger guy, a junior guy, and a new guy coming in. He did not have the Harlow advantage of many years of association with Richard Nixon as a peer, and therefore did not have the stature in Nixon's eyes that Harlow did. That made it very tough for him to function as a Congressional relations person.

I think that he was good, and I think he's since proven his ability as a Congressional operations and relations person, in terms of his enormous success as a Washington lobbyist. I think that these comments are not really a fair evaluation of Timmons. I think they were the ad hoc view at the time, and saying that "he gives no guidance to Congressional leaders. Doesn't develop and sell a plan to the Congressional leaders," is simply not a fair commentary, although it was probably what was felt at the time. The idea of bringing Ehrlichman and Kissinger, or me,

or any of the other White House staff people, into doing that sort of thing is, in my opinion, a terrible mistake, because it gets us to this problem of people that should be doing internal staff work being forced to do external work, which is going to preclude their ability to do the internal work. They're going to become partisans for Congress rather than for the White House, solely, to some degree, inevitably. I think it's wrong. It's not the way to do it. I don't think they should be external spokesmen. I don't think Ehrlichman or Kissinger should have become external spokesmen, as Kissinger did early on, and Ehrlichman did later on, because I think it hurts their effectiveness as honest broker[s]. They became issues in their own right, which is the first way to destroy your value as an intermediary.

[End side two cassette three]

[Begin side one cassette four]

RHG: There are a few names on the list here of people who were involved with the public relations work in different ways. Could you just talk about them briefly?

HRH: OK. I'll pick them at random without any particular order, because it'll be easier just to get it on the record that way, and I'm not sure what order they belong in, anyhow. I think we've covered Klein and Ziegler adequately, probably, unless something comes up as we go along here. Certainly Harlow in terms of Congressional relations.

RHG: I think Connally, too, we talked about quite a bit.

HRH: And probably Connally, right.

RHG: One that we haven't talked about really at all is sort of a gray eminence, which is Cliff [Clifford] Miller, a name that means not much to most people in the political or public world at all. Cliff Miller is a fellow who was President of a major public relations firm in Los Angeles, Ted Braun and Company. Ted [Theodore] Braun, the original founder of the company was an old political ally and advisor of Nixon's, going way back, from a professional PR viewpoint. He was, and the firm is, primarily a public relations consulting firm to major corporations. They're not what's popped up now, these proliferation of political PR firms that deal with political campaigns, and all that.

They were, in the pure sense, public relations counsellors. They did no press relations work and no press release activity or event promotion or that sort of thing for their clients at all. They counselled them on how to deal with their publics, whatever they were. Ted was a very wise guy, and Cliff, who worked under Ted and then took over the company when Ted retired, was similarly so. We used Cliff as a knowledgeable professional in the field of public opinion and dealing with various publics, as an outside consultant to us. It was on a purely volunteer basis.

He came back to Washington from time to time, would sit down with me, and go over what he, looking at it from the outside, viewed as our public relations concerns. He would listen to me expound what I viewed, and the President viewed, as our concerns in dealing with public opinion matters, specific issue matters, and general operational and procedural matters. Then he would ponder it and give us some counsel on how we might approach and

handle some of these things. He also spent time counselling Ziegler and Klein, specifically, on the same kinds of things, and on their structur[al] and procedural ideas. So he was, I would say, [an] outside viewpoint resource that we found very valuable in working in areas of public opinion kinds of things. I don't, offhand, think of any specific things that he presented, and it wasn't really.... We didn't look to him for specific ideas so much as general counsel on dealing with areas relating to public opinion and issue reaction and that sort of thing. He was sort of a gadfly. He'd come in and expound his viewpoints and go home again. That's what he wanted to do. It's what we wanted him to do, and how we used him.

A better known name, unfortunately, in this area, that we haven't talked about much, is Jeb Magruder, who was a young man out here in California, who came highly recommended by friends of the President, as somebody that would be a very good staff person in this area. On that basis, and my interview with him, I did bring him, and he did become Herb Klein's deputy. Worked in the Director of Communications office for some time, and was the guy that I saw that I could turn to with the President's "Get this kind of PR program" or "that kind of promotional effort" or "this kind of follow-up going," and that I could turn to him. He was an administrative type as well as PR-oriented. Therefore, unlike Klein, who was not an administrative type, could set up procedures, groups, systems, and so forth, to get some of these things done. That's what we looked to him to do. What he did, for a considerable length of time.... I'm not

exactly sure when he came in, but I think probably in mid-to-late '69. I think came on originally on my staff, and then moved over to the Klein staff, which was a better place for him to be, because the kinds of things he was doing should have been, and were, implemented through Klein. I think, again, Cliff Miller probably had a hand in that structuring, too.

Jeb later had the misfortune of being re-assigned to the Committee to Re-elect the President, the political campaign committee for the '72 re-election effort. Got caught up rather completely in the Watergate enterprise and consequently became better known than he had any desire or intent to be. The outcome of all that, I think, is pretty generally known. I don't think there's much I can add to the public record on it, because the public record is really more complete than my knowledge is, or was. So, unless there's something I need to go into further on Magruder, I'll skip him and go to another name that has become well known now, which [is] Lyn [Franklyn] Nofziger, who was brought in as a hatchet man, really, in the Congressional liaison operation.

Lyn was, by nature, a hatchet man. He's a tough, attack person. He was a guy we used to handle the gloves-off dealings with people, [while] Harlow and Timmons and those people were handling the kid gloves side of the treatment. We recognized Nofziger as a risk in two senses. One, that he was a tough hatchet man, and he was pretty much an uncontrollable guy. He had his own views. He was a very astute political operator. The other risk was that he was a Ronald Reagan loyalist. He came to

us from the Reagan California staff. But we had known him in California, too. Lyn made a classic comment to me when I went back to the White House after Reagan became President. [I] visited Lyn, who had taken over, in his inimitable fashion, President Nixon's old EOB [Executive Office Building] office, which was a huge, beautiful office that we had set up for the President on top of the outside stairs going into the EOB. That had become Lyn's office under the Reagan administration. He was in the office with his tie undone, and no jacket on, and no shoes on his feet. He had socks on, but no shoes. That was sort of a typical Nofziger look. We had a nice chat. One of the comments he made I thought was quite astute, which was, "If we--you and I --could have put together your guy's brains and my guy's charisma and charm, we would have had the unbeatable President of all time." [Laughter] There was something to that.

RHG: What kind of a thing does a hatchet operator do when dealing with Congress?

HRH: He deals with the threats. The threats to withhold, as contrasted to the offers to provide. He deals with strategy in the negative way. "How do we put the screws on this guy?"

RHG: You mean, "He's got an Air Force Base in his district that we could close," that sort of thing?

HRH: Could be. We didn't deal quite that heavy-handedly. That was Johnson's tactic. Nofziger was capable of moving pretty strongly in that direction, though, as a matter of fact. So I think that may be a valid question. I'm trying to see what.... I don't think I had anything else to add to Nofziger.

Another name--we've covered Klein, we've covered Magruder. Let's see what other names....

RHG: [John] Scali.

HRH: Well, let me.... I've got Frank Borman here in context, and he was early on, so let me deal with Frank Borman. Frank Borman, the astronaut--that was his claim to fame at that time--he was the first one to go out to the moon and back, without landing.

RHG: I think he may have been in Apollo IX [i.e., Apollo VIII].

HRH: It was one of those "firsts". A very fine guy. An outstanding guy. Very impressive, and impressed the President enormously. We talked.... Frank was going to move out of the astronaut program and into something, and was trying to decide what he was going to do. We talked to him about coming in to work in the public opinion and public relations area, because he had obvious, enormous skills in that area, and was an enormously strong, out-front figure. A person with a compelling personality and some fame that he had acquired on his own, too, that made him recognizable and acceptable at all levels. A guy that could move around and do things.

We talked to him about various possibilities in that regard, and he was very much interested in doing it, but he was concerned about moving to Washington for personal reasons, with his family. As a result, it ended up that he never did come in on a formal basis, although he did make himself available on a consulting and operational basis from time to time, mostly in relation to space activities. He was very helpful in those.

In the first year in office, another thing we were toying

with, which Borman was a possibility on, and which would have solved his family problem of coming to Washington to work on the White House staff, was trying to set up an external organization that would be a volunteer, support activity from outside that would be a sort of cheerleading public support-developing arm of the Presidency. Backing this administration, but doing it with outside funding, not government-supported in any way, and totally independent of the White House but closely coordinated with the White House--in the way that the Republican National Committee is politically--this would be in dealing with the general public. A "non-political" political-support group, let's say. Non-political support group.

The opportunity there arose, in a sense, because [of] Ross Perot, who's since become famous because of his General Motors thing, but at that time was in the data processing business in Texas. [Was] enormously successful and enormously wealthy personally, and very desirous of trying to be helpful to support the administration. Ross believed in things we were doing and felt that it was a private citizen's duty to back government's activities when they believed they were doing the right thing. Perot made a proposal that he would fund such a thing. His original proposal, as I recall it, was that he would contribute fifty million dollars of personal funds--his own money--to support the administration in whatever way we felt would be most supportive. What could he do, that would really be of value to us? Our first answer was, "Buy a television network." He said, "OK," and he went out to see if he could buy a television

network [Laughter], and found that fifty million dollars didn't quite get him very far along that line. So that became a non-doable thing. Then the thought was, maybe buy a major influential newspaper and try to become a supportive medium. The analysis of that got to being that any one newspaper is very limited in the range of influence that it could have, and that probably didn't make sense.

So, then he was talking about setting up a Silent American Majority organization outside the White House that Frank Borman might be the executive director of. That looked like an interesting possibility for awhile. It never came about. It would be an outside arm that would do--send out mailings, issue press releases, set up spokesmen and speakers to travel around in support of the administration, and all that sort of thing. On a totally external, volunteer, support basis. It was very appealing, but I'm not sure exactly why, never got put together. That was how Ross Perot was going to help us. Frank Borman was tied in to that. Going along with other people....

RHG: Was Perot a disappointment to the administration? Did he...?

HRH: No. He was a loose cannon to an extent, because we never really worked out.... It was a disappointment that we didn't get that worked out, and I forget exactly what got in the way of getting it worked out. Later on he took it upon himself to do some things that he felt were in support of what we needed to do, such as going over to get prisoners released and that sort of thing. Then, of course, his famous thing that's been made into books and movies where he got the hostages out of Iran, which was, I think,

after our time. I don't think Nixon was President any more, by that time. It wasn't hostages out of Iran--his thing was getting his own people out of Iran that made the big movie....

Ross, of course, was a self-made man. A super-entrepreneurial type who was hard to control. You couldn't give him orders; you had to give him suggestions, and hope that he would pick them up. It was not a bad relationship at all. I would say "disappointed" only in the sense that we didn't really find the way, and work out the way, to take as full advantage as we might have, of what was an enormously valuable offer.

RHG: He also helped during the campaign, didn't he? I don't mean with contributions, but he....

HRH: Donated people.

RHG: People, and did some management studies, or something like that.

HRH: Yeah, he did. He did. And he was a terrific guy. On a similar sense, Walter Annenberg had gotten into this area--Walter Annenberg being a publisher of TV Guide, and The Daily Racing Form--another very successful and very wealthy individual. There were discussions with him at various times about trying to start our own television stations--I mean a Ted Turner type of thing, that might work out--or a newspaper. The same thing we'd talked to Perot about, which never worked out, and ultimately Annenberg got his first love, and became ambassador to Great Britain. Actually did an outstanding job in that post.

I'm trying to see here what other people I wanted to cover. There, of course, were all the people in the administration who had varying roles at varying times, as spokesmen and all that

kind of thing. So they came in and out of the public opinion area as they needed to. There was a fellow named Dick Moore, who was the President of KTTV here in Los Angeles, and who had known Nixon over the years. Another old-timer from the Times-Mirror Company. Dick was a guy [for whom] the President had a lot of regard for his down-to-earth good sense. Also a successful businessman, but not at the Perot or Annenberg level. Dick came into the White House and [worked] in the area of Presidential image and tried to help in speechwriting kinds of things, on anecdotal development. He did a lot of traveling with the President and watched crowd reactions, and counselled on speech content to which people seemed to be responsive.

Also, on the whole color project--the President felt we were not getting any feel of Presidential private meetings with people out to the general public, and that we ought to try to do that. Because some of them were very impressive: meetings with blind children; the blind Indian in the White House; retarded children at the home for the incurables. Not only unfortunate people; also meetings with fortunate people, [whom] the President established very good rapport with but nobody every knew it. So, Moore would sit in on meetings and then talk with press people afterwards, giving them views to the outside of what was being done on the inside. He was also supposed to sit in on meetings and then write a color report on each of the meetings, to get something in the files as to how the President handled things with people in his personal image sort of thing.

HRH: Is there anything else you remember on Moore that...?

RHG: The last name that I took from your list was John Scali.

HRH: OK. John Scali came along later--let me see if I can figure from notes here--roughly when I would say, sort of midstream in the.... Yeah, looks like he was brought in somewhere in the mid-'71 area, which would be midstream in the first term. Scali had been a radio and television reporter and commentator, and a man who had also fallen in, by accident, [into] a highly sensitive negotiating position in some foreign policy.... He was a foreign affairs correspondent. He had fallen into some position where he became the negotiator on--maybe you remember, you can tell me. [The 1962 Cuban missile crisis.]

RHG: [No.] I don't remember.

HRH: Well, the researchers will have to look this up, because I can't remember. In some very famous, highly sensitive foreign policy negotiating thing, Scali became the go-between between the United States and some other country [the Soviet Union]. Not in our administration, an earlier administration--I don't remember whether it was Kennedy or Johnson, and I'm not sure exactly when it was, but he had achieved some fame and expertise as a result of that, because it became known afterwards that he had played this major role.

He was brought in to the White House in a sort of generalist sense to begin with, and I'm not clear as to exactly.... I don't remember exactly what it was that his task was to be. I know that he did take on some responsibilities as regards communication and press relations, and he had substantial respect from the President. One of the things he was doing was trying to

deal with--because of his stature as a newsperson himself--he took on a program of trying to correct factual errors that had appeared in the press. To deal, on a very positive, upscale basis, where somebody reported something, that it was factually wrong. John would sit down with them, try to explain to them where they were wrong, why they were wrong, and what was right. Trying to get it corrected. I know the President thought this was a good thing to do, but then sort of backed off it and said, "You know, there's no use doing that. You're not going to change their attitude. They don't care about the facts, and they're going to do what they're going to do, no matter what. So don't waste time on them." But Scali did.

He was in on a lot of substantive discussions and provided counsel, internally, in areas of press relations and that sort of thing. Are there some specifics here that might remind me of some of them? Oh, I see one here.

RHG: I'm not sure I took any notes. I think I remember from listening to your journal that he tried to take something of a leadership role in this selling "Nixon the man" sort of approach that John Connally was also doing.

HRH: Right. I see a point here on a November 1971 Cabinet meeting at which Scali gave the Cabinet a long dissertation on how they should present themselves to the public in an election year, to be most effective (because we were only a year away from the election at that point). His points were to present "Nixon the man": "Talk about your dealings with him as a man, as a person. Summarize his accomplishments in the most colorful way that you

can, but in capsule form. Not in long, drawn-out things. Get 'Nixon the man' out to the people, not just the policies. Always consider"--he was advising them as a TV person--"carefully how you will look and how you will sound on television when you're doing a public event that's covered by television. Remember that the television impression of that is more important than the first-hand impression because it goes to many, many more times people than the actual activity does." He made the point of getting something on TV every day, and in doing it, advocat[ing] and defend[ing] Nixon. "Take strong positions and be partisan. Be strong. Deal with what goes on."

Scali did a good job of that, as Connally did, as Moynihan did. It was interesting, because all of them were outside people. They weren't Republican partisan people. Connally was a renowned Democratic politician. Moynihan was a renowned Democratic politician and academician, from Harvard. Scali was a renowned newsman. These were people talking from the outside to the people on the inside, and telling them how to more effectively conduct themselves and to do a better job of building the President in the public's eye. That was an effort that we felt was important and Scali was good in doing that.

RHG: Our last topic under the public relations rubric is leaks. The Nixon administration, of course, had some very, very famous--to say famous leaks is probably too mild--they had some very famous leaking going on. The problem is both larger and more chronic than the fact of a few famous leaks. I wonder if you could say something general about that?

HRH: Well, the leaks started early on and one of the famous areas that was reflected right at the beginning of the administration were leaks that Nixon was very concerned about--foreign policy, national security type of leaks--that resulted in his having the Director of the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] [J. Edgar] Hoover put wiretaps on newsmen and also on potential leak sources within the White House. That was obviously a non-publicized activity that became highly publicized when revealed much later on. But this was done right at the early-on days in 1969, and lasted on-and-off, on various people, over an extensive period of time. It didn't really help much in determining where the leaks were coming from, and it didn't help much in stopping the leaks.

Later there was the "plumbers" operation that also became famous, that was an effort to stop leaks. It didn't have any great effect on stopping leaks. There was the great episode of the Pentagon Papers that became the most instantly and widely publicized leak effort. You had a case where Daniel Ellsberg simply took a whole stack of classified material regarding Vietnam--not regarding the Nixon administration, it was all material from the Johnson administration--and he gave the material to the New York Times.

The reaction to that is sort of a classic one that maybe is worth talking about a little bit because it relates, in more garish form, let's say, to all of the leak problems. Which was that not that the leak itself, or the contents--the material in the leaks--didn't hurt us, particularly, but the fact that we couldn't control classified information any better than

apparently we were. Because these materials were being published in the New_York_Times, [it] caused Kissinger incredible levels of concern in that it totally destroyed the United States government's credibility in dealing with both both friends and enemies on a confidential basis, which we were in the midst of doing on a number of fronts. The secret Vietnam negotiations being the most upfront of those, but also the whole [People's Republic of] China rapprochement was a result of and a process of intense and intensely secret negotiations and discussions, [which], had they become known, would have sunk the whole effort, as a lot of the Vietnam peace talk things would have.

The feeling here was that we must do something effective and rapid to deal with the Pentagon Papers issue, or it's going to destroy the integrity of our government. It's (A) going to encourage other people to do the same kind of leaking, and (B) destroy our ability to deal confidentially with other governments or within our own government. Also, it was felt that it was in complete violation of the law. They had violated the security-classification system. Ultimately the courts decided against that concept. It resulted in an enormous stir within the administration, with all kinds of people being mobilized. Ehrlichman and me and Kissinger at the top level of the White House staff. John Scali. The public information type people like Dick Moore and Clark MacGregor and Bryce Harlow. All sorts of people. We tried to figure out how to deal with it. Tried to develop strategies and approaches and did not really find a good way to do it.

Some of the offshoots of it were the [Thomas] Huston plan, which was set up to deal with classified material and secret documents, and to do some counterleaking of stuff that might get into blunting the Pentagon Papers story. There was constant concern that we weren't handling the issue adequately or properly, and we never did find the right way to handle it, adequately or properly. It ended up leaving us with a very bad overall situation that diverted the administration for a long time. Caused the President and us to try and react in ways that didn't do us any good, and set us up for doing some harm, as it came back to haunt us, in terms of "plumbers" and the other kinds of activities.

It was followed up very shortly by a SALT [Strategic Arms Limitation Talks] memorandum that was leaked to the New York Times, and the President's reaction to that was an instant order to polygraph everybody concerned, which we couldn't do and didn't do. There was overreaction to that kind of thing, on Nixon's part. But understandable overreaction. It was perceived as a serious problem, and actually was. Later on, after it simmered down some, Nixon took a reverse tack. Sort of a crossfire tack. Wanted to be sure and try [to] keep the issue alive, as an issue, as a ploy on our part, in order to hurt the Democrats. To get the things out and make the point. Because there were a lot of things in the Pentagon Papers that were harmful to the Democrats: to Johnson and the Democrats, as a whole.

RHG: Yeah. I think one of the things he did, too, was try to declassify a great number of documents regarding Vietnam, the

[Ngo Dinh] Diem assassination, and try to do the Democrats some harm by the idea of opening classified documents. I know this was, obviously, a very difficult issue for the White House and it brought out things in Nixon--the darker side, I guess it's fair to say--in the way he reacted to it, in some ways. Such as....

HRH: Yeah, it did. Because he felt the real core of our integrity was being threatened, and he was very frustrated because he did not see a good way to deal with it. So, it was sort of a floundering thing, a flailing out. Trying to do something. It was both a substantive concern, and a public opinion concern. He was trying to deal with both of those concerns in figuring out what to do. I would say, in retrospect, we never did really deal with that issue itself, nor the overall issue of leaks, in an effective manner. We have the ongoing problem. The current administration's got the same problems.

RHG: I should say, I included this subject within the public relations rubric because it shares with the whole public relations enterprise the fact that the President is trying to govern, and has to use information in a certain way, and this is the case where information is leaking out and it's hindering his ability to govern. In fact, the first leak that I have in my notes from your journal is earlier than the Pentagon Papers, and was one you mentioned earlier. Which was the leak of a text of the reorganization part of the State of the Union message, which was leaked to the Times and the Post in January 1971, and [was] much less controversial.

HRH: That was, of course, not a national security leak. All that was,

was a concern that, from our own public opinion viewpoint, it blunted the impact of the President's announcement of this in his address, by pre-announcing it before he gave the address.

RHG: Let me ask you. There'll just be two things with the Pentagon Papers because I feel very humble before this issue, because all the most infamous parts of the Nixon administration have received so much attention...

HRH: Right.

RHG: ...that they're an industry unto themselves. Someone in my position has to face, in his life, as one of my teachers said about literature.... She said, either she devoted herself to Finnegan's Wake, or to all the rest of the world's literature. [Laughter.] These issues are very similar for me. I would like to ask one question, and that is: I read John Ehrlichman's book not too long ago, and in his book there's just a cry that comes through the print fairly well to the reader. It was that this man went to prison for one of two reasons. One reason was the fact that he had authorized the burglary of Daniel Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office. He says he just did not do that.

There's a memorandum that may have been one of the main documents that caused the conviction. It's from Egil Krogh (I forget the recipient), and he's outlining some things that could be done, and talks about getting some information about Ellsberg's mental strength and health. Ehrlichman writes, [paraphrase] "It's all right, as long as it can't be traced." Now, it sounds terrible.

HRH: Um hm.

RHG: Ehrlichman says in his book [that], all he meant by that was, "Well, go ahead, but do it discreetly. Don't bring it back to the White House." He said he didn't have the slightest idea in the world there was any break-in involved. Importantly, he says something like that would have required a budget, a significant amount of money. Somebody had to authorize that. He didn't do it. Do you know who did?

HRH: Nope. I don't. I don't have anywhere near the knowledge of that whole thing that John has, because I was not involved at all in that, and they haven't even accused me of being involved in that one. [Laughter] For that reason, I didn't have any particular overriding interest in it. I've never made any effort to try and untangle it. I'm sure John has. I don't know what the result, if any, is.

RHG: Well, his book just says that Krogh has said different things. that "Yes", he authorized it.. I don't know whether Krogh was sufficiently senior to authorize something like that. I think Ehrlichman suspects that Nixon authorized it--well, that's what he says in his book--and that Colson was involved in some way.

HRH: You get into that sort of thing. You get into.... It's the same thing as the Watergate break-in. We still don't know who authorized that, either. I said in my book on Watergate that I thought Nixon had caused the Watergate break-in, so that was translated instantly by the press into saying Nixon ordered the break-in, which is not what I said at all, and I do not believe that Nixon did order the break-in. Nor that he even knew about it. But I do believe that he caused it. I think he believes

that he caused it, also.

He caused it by his insistence on getting information. I don't think he ever insisted, suggested, or even conceived that anybody would get information by bugging phones in the Democratic National Committee. What happens there is some one person, well-meaning, says, "Get this information," which Ehrlichman apparently approved. "Get some information about Ellsberg, if you can." John, I remember, arguing--I guess in his trial--the point that they sneered at him and said, "Well, getting information.... How else are you going to get information, except by breaking into the office?" Well, there's lots of other ways.

You usually get information by other ways than breaking into an office. There are often employees who are disgruntled. Who will bring information to you. We get that all the time. In political campaigns you get information from the disgruntled Democrats, who think they're doing something wrong. I alluded to that to a degree in talking about the bombing halt problem [during] the Nixon campaign. We got information from somebody at the Democratic administration, who was distressed with what they thought the President was doing, and felt they owed it to the world, or themselves, or history, or something, to tell us about it. That we were being alerted to look out for what they're going to do. I don't think it was because they wanted to help us. I think it was because they wanted to stop the doing of it. Whatever the motivation, you get information.

Nurses in doctors' offices are notorious for providing

information. Bellmen in hotels are notorious for providing information. If you want to know who somebody was sleeping with in a hotel last night, it's very easy to find out. Without doing anything illegal. Without breaking into his room and photographing him, or stealing his papers, or anything like that. You can find out what doctors were treating people for, without getting the papers out. I think that, just as Nixon was trying to get campaign information, and that got mis-translated, through a chain of events, into somebody telling somebody to go break into the Democratic National Committee, I suspect that in the Ellsberg break-in case that you had Ehrlichman apparently authorizing getting information, and that ultimately being translated into somebody, probably thinking he was doing what he should do.... Just as I think the Cubans [who] broke into the DNC thought they were doing something somebody proper wanted them to do. I believe those guys when they say they thought they were serving America--that they were lead to believe that. I think they were. I think whoever broke into Ellsberg's [psychiatrist's office] probably thought he was serving the President.

I don't think that either the President.... Maybe Ehrlichman does think the President ordered it. I would doubt that. I don't think you have to have ordered it at that level. I think, what happens is (what I call) the cowboys down at the lower levels in these action-oriented enterprises, tend to translate what's told to them into their language. What comes in as, "We've got to get some information about this," comes out, "We've got to break in and kill these people, and do whatever is

necessary to be able to prove the point that we're trying to prove." I just think that happens.

RHG: And there were a couple of cowboys in this case, in [E. Howard] Hunt and [G. Gordon] Liddy, down in the White House basement.

HRH: That's right.

RHG: Did you ever meet Liddy?

HRH: Nope. Never met Liddy or Hunt. Still haven't.

RHG: I spoke to someone who had met Liddy, and he said that you could tell, almost right away, that you were dealing with someone with wildness in his eyes.

HRH: Yeah, an unusual person.

RHG: Yeah.

HRH: Well, you see that in Liddy's public appearances. I have seen him on television, in interviews and stuff like that, and you can see it there. You can see it in what he's written; the way he conducted himself during the trial and his prison time; and everything else. The guy has a different approach to life than most people do.

RHG: So the misfortune was that he was ever brought into the White House. Someone made a real mistake.

HRH: Yep.

RHG: Let me just go through a few of the things I took from your journal about the Pentagon Papers...

HRH: OK.

RHG: ...and see if you have any comment to make on them. Some of them are very.... It was a difficult issue, and things were happening and things were said. Here's Nixon saying, "Anybody on

the White House staff who talks to the New York Times is to be fired instantly."

HRH: That's a typical--and it's my reporting of what Nixon said, so I believe it's accurate [Laughter], and it doesn't surprise me-- it's a typical overstatement, overreaction kind of thing. He doesn't mean that. What he means is, people at the White House are to stop talking to the New York Times, and he expects that to be considered an order and he expects that order to be carried out. It's also possible that he actually did, at the time he said it, intend that if we catch somebody talking to the New York Times, we will fire them as an example to prove to people they'd better not. I don't think if we caught thirty people talking to the New York Times we would have fired all thirty of them.

[End side one cassette four]

[Begin side two cassette four]

RHG: In the same entry I notice that the White House tried to get Lyndon Johnson to take a part in this and to make a statement in defense of the Presidency, and here it says.... I guess Harlow called him, had a lengthy conversation with him...

HRH: Yeah.

RHG: ...and Johnson "became unstrung" (it says here).

HRH: I don't remember that, and I can't expand on it. Johnson was very supportive of President Nixon in a lot of things relating to Vietnam. It was a logical thing to contact him because, of course, the "Papers" covered things that were of concern to him. Apparently, he was so upset about it that he wouldn't get into

the issue at all. I don't know what his reactions were. I have no insight beyond what's here; I have no memory beyond what's here, really, except to say that it's not surprising that the President would have told someone, and Harlow would be a logical one (I would have been another logical one, it could just as well have been me)--but somebody like that--to call Lyndon Johnson and ask him if he would make a public statement on this thing. Because the Presidency and the integrity of the government was threatened.

It was felt, at that time, that it was an issue of that level. Kissinger put it in very apocalyptic terms. He said, "Our ability to govern is totally threatened here, if we cannot get ahold of this, and get control of it, we may find ourselves in a position where we will not be able to govern." Because we had all these other uprisings and things, and now, here it is, just throwing it right in your face kind of a thing. "Other governments will not understand our inability to handle something like this." I think Henry was overstating the case, somewhat substantially, and I think the President, in his own mind, was inclined to look at it in apocalyptic terms, and he was aided and abetted to a fare-thee-well by Henry, who churned up the thing. The whole atmosphere in the White House at this thing was very overreactive.

Why Johnson collapsed and became unstrung, I don't know. I don't know exactly what Bryce means there. Unfortunately, neither Bryce nor Johnson are around to tell us anymore.

RHG: All right. This is June 29, 1971, in a Cabinet meeting. Nixon

emphasizes the problem of hostile bureaucrats. "They're bastards, out to screw us." And you are designated the "Lord High Executioner", and your orders are to be acted upon.

HRH: That was again this substantially inflated rhetoric to make a point. To overstate the case to get it through that we're not kidding. That this isn't a minor matter; that it isn't something of routine concern. It was building up. That was June 29th. The papers were released the 13th. So, we're looking at sixteen days later, a couple of weeks later. The problem is that the thing is still rumbling. We haven't gotten our hands around it; we haven't gotten control of it. I see one of my notes on the 24th, saying, "Nixon's concerned that the administration is not handling the Pentagon Papers simply enough. We have to always repeat the same simple story." In other words, it was getting confused and turned into a complex story, where to Nixon....

As he said in my notes on the 20th, in the week right after the thing, "That the Pentagon Papers don't matter, per se. What matters, is that someone stole and published classified material, [and] broke the law. What happens there is, if someone can do it once, someone can do it again. What that proves is, that classified material is not sacrosanct. It's not safe. That's absolute proof that classified national security material is not safe." That's what concerned him. What he was concerned with is, "Somehow we've got to simplify that so people understand it. We don't let it get muddied into the waters of 'This was a moral issue,' and that 'This man did this because these were terrible things that were being done that the public should know about,'

and that 'The Times had a right to print it 'cause the man gave it to them,' and all these things must, not be allowed to confuse it."

That's why, on the 24th, he's saying "We're not handling it simply enough. We have to always repeat the same simple story. The documents were classified. They were illegally stolen and published. The law was broken. And we need to frighten people about the need to [punish] the criminal who endangered the country." To him it was a very simplistic issue, and it needed to be put in those simplistic terms. He likened it several times to the [Alger] Hiss case, in the same sense. That it wasn't necessarily the content that was damaging, it was the fact that it happened that was damaging.

Then he gets into the Cabinet meeting and emphasizes that "There are bureaucrats," and he's using Ellsberg as an example, "hostile bureaucrats, that are out to get us. They're out to destroy the country," is what he's really feeling. He uses his colorful language, and uses it then in describing me. He said, "Haldeman is the Lord High Executioner. What he tells you is orders from me, and you are to carry it out. We are going to act effectively. We've got to figure out how, and I don't want any second-guessing or anything like that." That's what he's saying in this Cabinet meeting.

He goes further. He's declared that same day that he's designating John Connally as the economic spokesman, and that any Cabinet views, if they're different from the administration line, are not to be said publicly. "All leaks will be discovered and

all leaks will be gotten rid of. You all have under you Departments full of vipers. They'll strike. They want us to lose next year. Arthur Burns is talking too much. There will be no wage-price controls," which, shortly after that, there were. "There must be confidence in the country that we know what we're doing." That's what really bothered him. Then he's saying, "Haldeman is going to be down the throat of anyone regarding leaks. If Haldeman talks, it's the President talking. Don't come to me." Then he got up and stalked out of the Cabinet meeting.

RHG: That sounds like a very rough meeting.

HRH: It was rough. He wanted them to know it was rough. He wanted them to be uncomfortable. He wanted them to be very concerned. He wanted them to be worried. He was putting on a show for the Cabinet, and he did it in this very blatant, profane, outspoken way, which was not his normal way of dealing with the Cabinet, at all. He blasted them and then he got up and stalked out of the meeting, so that he didn't give anybody a chance to argue back with him, or anything else. It was done for dramatic effect.

RHG: The next day, really the same sort of tone continues: "Wants somebody brought in like [Thomas] Huston--an SOB--to head an operation dealing with this case."

HRH: Right.

RHG: Then, I guess a week later, he wants to polygraph concerned bureaucrats.

HRH: Right.

RHG: He wants [J. Edgar] Hoover and [J. Fred] Buzhardt, from the

Defense Department, to push ahead on discovering the conspiracy.

"Going to hire Colson's CIA guy" (who I presume is Hunt).

HRH: That's fascinating. It is Hunt. Is that your parenthesis there?

RHG: Yes, that's mine. I just presumed that.

HRH: OK. OK. I didn't have that in the notes, then? OK.

RHG: No, just "Colson's CIA guy."

HRH: Right. That must be right, though. "Revoke the security clearances of all the Kennedy and Johnson holdovers." He [the President] sees, at the time--and maybe now you can look back at it and say it's gross overreaction, and in some ways it was overreaction--but on the other hand, he sees a real threat here. And Henry is encouraging his seeing it this way. A threat that could bring down the government. He's unable to figure out how to deal with it, and the Supreme Court shoots him down by upholding the legality of the New York Times action in publishing the "Papers" in a landmark decision that totally [shoots] down the position he [is] in. It was tough stuff, all the way around in there at that time.

RHG: But on the other hand, he's bringing in vipers--some of the outer ones--"Colson's CIA guy."

HRH: He doesn't look at him as a viper. He looks at him as an operative who is going to.... I'm sure Colson's told him, "This is a guy who knows how to get things done."

RHG: Now, one of the most peculiar leaks--I don't have any notes on this here. I don't know why. One of the most peculiar leaks from the Nixon administration occurred just prior to this in, (I think), May of 1971, during the India-Pakistan War. It was a

leak from the National Security Council, initially to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and then to Jack Anderson, in some part. The [Robert] Welander-Yeoman [Charles] Radford incident.

HRH: Yeah. That's in here, somewhere.

RHG: Have I got that in...? I just didn't find it.

HRH: Yeah.

RHG: Very strange. How did Nixon respond to something like that?

HRH: Well, it was very strange. Let me find this, because I.... Let me use my notes to refresh myself.

RHG: OK. I think it was in May.

HRH: It was in here, I'm sure. Well, that may have been when it happened, but the reaction was later.

RHG: Mmm. All right.

HRH: Here it is. December 21st.

RHG: Oh. All right, that's why I missed it.

HRH: See, I didn't know about it. Because that's when I first heard about it. Ehrlichman told me about this Yeoman Radford incident. I think that's when we came to know about it, or something. I don't know. I forget what the timing was, but anyway, that's when Ehrlichman first learned about it, and told the President, I guess. The President wanted to take strong action, but he [didn't] know how to take strong action against the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The upshot there is, we found out the next day.... Ehrlichman de-briefed Admiral Welander at some point, and that tape is available, which you probably have. Some journalists have it, I know, and are using it. There's a book about to come out on this whole subject.

RHG: I think that tape is restricted, as far as the Archives is concerned.

HRH: It may be restricted as far as the Archives is concerned...

RHG: But somebody's got it.

HRH: ...[but] the guys that are writing the book have the tape. It's been effectively de-classified at this point.

RHG: Well, all I have to say for the Archives is, they got it from somewhere else.

HRH: That's quite probable. I think I know where they got it from, but I'm not sure. In any event, the journalists that are writing the book have the tape. This is a main feature of the book, this whole thing. They've done a lot of in-depth research that goes way beyond what I knew at that time, and way beyond what I know at this time. I would not want to try and carry that case through to its conclusion. I would simply say that here, it was an astonishing revelation to discover that there was a Navy yeoman, assigned to Kissinger's staff, by the Navy, who, upon orders of the highest command of the Navy, was apparently (as far as I know), purloining papers from Henry Kissinger's briefcase, and delivering those papers to Admiral Welander of the Navy, who was transmitting those papers to Admiral [Thomas] Moorer, who was Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Apparently this Yeoman Radford, we thought at the time--I'm not sure this was ever sustained--was transmitting material to Jack Anderson. That was assumed, because there was presumed to be some Mormon relationship. Radford was a Mormon and Anderson's a Mormon and there was supposed to be...

RHG: Some personal relationship. They'd had dinner together, something like that.

HRH: ...some family tie, or he had lived at Anderson's house, or something. There was something that tied.... I don't know whether it was known or just assumed, maybe he had, or what. At this time, what I was told was, apparently he's doing that. That's what I wrote down in my journal at this time. Nixon was very upset, because Kissinger and [Alexander] Haig didn't raise the issue with him. Apparently, they had know this earlier, and had not told Nixon, probably for fear of Nixon's reaction to it.

That's what this book goes into, is the whole mystery, and they draw all kinds of potentially exciting conclusions from the fact that the President's national security advisor and his military deputy, General Haig, know that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff has stolen material from the national security advisor, for intelligence purposes at the JCS, and have not informed the President of that.

My notes here, which obviously, I'm sure, come to me from Ehrlichman.... Ehrlichman was handling this case and he's telling me this, and I'm just making notes of it in my journal, say, "[Melvin] Laird is trying to kill the matter completely." Then I say, "There will probably be a monumental hush-up all the way around on it," which is my opinion of this issue as it's first come to my attention, that there's going to be a monumental hush-up. That's exactly what happened. Yeoman Radford was secretly, quietly transferred to some distant post, and no action was taken against any of these people. Later on, during the

Watergate era, when the House Military Affairs Committee subpoenaed both Ehrlichman and me to testify regarding various things, pseudo-Watergate related, this matter was given the imprimatur of the highest level of secrecy.

I assume there are probably White House tapes that add a lot of information to this, at this point, but they're probably classified. What I know is not classified, as far as I know, so I'm not violating any classification. I'm perfectly willing.... I know what these journalists have got, which goes substantially beyond what I knew. The interesting thing that I knew, was that it was deemed absolutely imperative, at the time of the Watergate investigations--this was December of '71 and the Watergate investigations were summer of '73, so it's almost two years later--we were told we are not to say anything. If any question arises, indirectly or directly, bearing on this, we are to impose executive privilege and national security secrecy on the matter.

It was obvious that some of the Congressmen or Senators, whichever committee it was that we were before, were aware of some of the factors involved in this, because we would say, "That relates to a matter that's not to be discussed," and they'd say, "Fine. Don't discuss it."

RHG: How had they found out?

HRH: I don't know. I don't know any of the stuff about this. To me, it's a fascinating mystery, and to the guys that are writing this book, it's a fascinating mystery, and they're making a fascinating mystery out of it. They go way beyond this. They have a thesis that ties Bob [Robert] Woodward to naval

intelligence, to Al Haig, and to Fred Buzhardt, and they come up with an incredibly fascinating.... From my viewpoint, I can't shoot it down. I've told them, I will not participate in their project, in the sense of providing any information, either from my knowledge or from my files. But I got interested enough that I told them what I would do is I would tell them if anything they were telling me was, to my knowledge, not true. I said, "I won't verify that anything you're saying is true. But if you tell me something that I know is not true, I will tell you that I know that is not true." I have not been able to come up with any things where I could tell them that what I know is true. Some of what they're telling me I know is true. Some of what they're telling me I simply don't know, one way or the other. I don't have any knowledge or sufficient knowledge to verify or [refute] the item. The fact remains that I can't shoot down.... I can't tell them that I know they're wrong, either in their facts or their hypotheses. I think it's going to be.... I can hardly wait to read the book. I think it's going to be an absolutely fascinating book. I keep telling them I wish they'd quit asking me questions and publish the book, so I can read it.

RHG: This case is similar to the Pentagon Papers case in that, obviously there are leaks involved and it's classified information.

[Interruption]

HRH: You were raising the point of the parallel with this Radford incident and the Pentagon Papers case....

RHG: Both are leaking classified information. I think, arguably, in

the Radford case the information being released is much more sensitive. Yet the responses from the White House were much different.

HRH: Yeah, I think there are differences in the case, at least to my knowledge. Unfortunately I have to deal in some ignorance on this. I don't know what the outcome of this sentence was, that says "Radford was apparently also transmitting India-Pakistan material to Jack Anderson." (A) I don't know that Jack Anderson published any classified India Pakistan material, and (B) I don't know that they know that he got it, that he actually had any, that he didn't publish, or that he did publish, and (C) I don't know that if Anderson did publish such material, I don't know that it was ever established that he did get it from Radford. It was assumed at this point, but my recollection is, that as that case went on, that they were either not able to establish that Radford had ever given anything to Anderson, or even more strongly, that they were able to establish that Radford had not given anything to Anderson. Therefore there was never a case for nailing Radford on giving anything to Anderson. The only case on Radford that I recollect being clearly established and on the record, was Radford giving stuff to Welander. That there was no actual or presumed legal violation, probably, because the material that he was giving Welander, Welander was probably cleared to see. So he wasn't violating the classification, and all that.

RHG: It's just, I guess, an administrative crime.

HRH: He was violating the need-to-know question, although you could

argue that Welander, his superior, had ordered him, [and] that he had a need to know. You can also say, as a matter of policy, that the way of getting information.... It's not a proper way of getting information to send some kid over to take it out of someone's briefcase. The way you get it is to ask the principal to give you a copy. This was an underhanded maneuver, obviously.

My recollection is, that at the time of the Watergate related hearings, when this issue came up, that I was told, and that we were told, that we were not to testify as to anything on this, or allude to it in any way, or even indicate that it existed, because of the President's concern as to what this would do to the status of the military in a country where the military was already suffering badly from an image and public opinion and public support viewpoint. Were it to become publicly known that the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was, in effect, stealing material out of the national security advisor's briefcase, in order to provide himself with information, that this could be something of incredible damage. In other words, that the viewpoint on this one was that letting out the fact that this process had taken place would be more damaging than the process itself had been. Therefore, [it] needed to be protected as a secure matter, in and of itself. It no longer is a secure matter, so I don't have any problem talking about it, because it's going to be known publicly. These people do have the Welander tape, where Welander admitted: (A) that he got the material from Radford, and (B) that he gave it to Moorer. So, I don't think there's any question that that process took place.

The question that remains is, why it took place, and why it was so important to keep it a secret after it was found to have taken place. Even two years later it was so important to keep it a secret.

RHG: I suppose, too, that if Nixon had internally, in confidence, taken some action against the Joint Chiefs, that could have presented some problems for his future dealings with the military, as well.

HRH: Well, he's the Commander in Chief. The Joint Chiefs, I mean he can fire every one of them.

RHG: But if he does, it's not going to make it easy to conduct business the next day.

HRH: You can argue both ways. You can argue that if doesn't do something, it doesn't make it easy, either. If he doesn't, then he's letting the Joint Chiefs get away with doing what they did. One can argue that he.... I'm very curious as to what he did. I don't know what he did on this thing. I'm interested to see here this thing that says [Elmo] Zumwalt was apparently involved, because I didn't realize that, and I was on a young president's organization speaking program with Zumwalt in Venice in May of last year. Just a year ago. At that time I knew about this book these guys were writing, and I asked Zumwalt if he knew about it. Not because I thought he was involved, but because I was curious as to whether he knew. I was curious to see what the military reaction would be. He did not. I told him that what their thesis was, and that they had all the information on this Welander thing. He acted as if he couldn't care less. I don't know [if]

he cared or not.

The interesting thing I would like to know in this, vis-a-vis what we're talking about here, is, what did Nixon do--or what did anybody do--about this? In other words, was Moorer reprimanded? I think Welander was transferred out of the Joint Chiefs. He was a staff member of the Joint Chiefs, I think. I think he was transferred out.

RHG: He was liaison officer to the National Security Council?

HRH: Yeah. For the Joint Chiefs. I think he was, at least. I'm not totally sure how the cast of characters fit together on this. It's interesting to me that it's not typical that something... That Nixon would have let this, what I would think he would have to have viewed as a gross breach of propriety, if nothing else, go uncovered. Moorer was considered to be a friend. I'm told that Moorer was not a friend, as Zumwalt was also not a friend. He was very anti-Nixon for two reasons. One, his reduction of strength of the Navy, and two, his rapprochement with [the People's Republic of] China and detente with the Soviet Union.

RHG: Well, the last leaks item I have is the fact that Laird was apparently a notorious leaker, of things having particularly to do with the troop withdrawals. Can you talk a little bit about that?

HRH: I was never totally sure whether that was actually the case or just believed to be the case. Nor what was believed to be the reason. My recollection is that it was thought that he wasn't a leaker in a [damaging] way. It was that he wanted to get credit. It was a politician doing what politicians do. It was a former

Congressmen doing exactly what Congressmen do. When you tell them a secret, they run out and reveal it in order to get credit for it, if it's something good. Or, they run out and reveal it if it's something bad, in order to get credit for uncovering the problem. That's what Laird was doing in those things. These were--it wasn't so--it was leaking, in a sense.... I've got to say that Henry Kissinger did exactly the same thing.

A leak is a bad, pejorative term if you don't want the information put out. It's not, if you do want the information put out. There is a lot of leaking, as [everyone] in Washington knows, that's done on a constructive basis. It's done intentionally. I did leaking, on orders. I was told. We used Jack Anderson, indirectly, as a resource to get things published that we wanted published that we didn't want to put out as official announcements. We had a side channel to Jack Anderson, one step removed. If the President wanted something made publicly known, but didn't want to announce it, didn't want it to be official in any way, we had a way of leaking that, as "a high White House official knows that" or "says that", or something, to Jack Anderson. With never any attribution of the source, and we got it printed, as a leak, because we wanted it printed. Kissinger did a lot of leaking of things that we wanted printed. He also did leaking of things we didn't want printed. Kissinger was guilty of doing what Laird is accused of, also. We had another leaker. Nixon leaked stuff sometimes, too. [Laughter]

RHG: All right. We're going to spend a few minutes on domestic intelligence, and J. Edgar Hoover. There's a note in here that I

put an exclamation point by, which I guess is an indication of my incredulous response. It was that Nixon had thought, at least at one moment, of making J. Edgar Hoover a counsellor to the President in the White House, and I wonder if we might use that thought as a way to talk a bit about J. Edgar Hoover, and what he was like, and what his relationship was with Nixon.

HRH: Yeah. Where is it, because I want to get it into context--do you know?

RHG: It's September 18, 1971. Working on the Hoover resignation-- actually, it was a way to get him out of the....

HRH: Yeah, that's why I needed the con[te]xt.... I assumed that's what it was. You have to look at.... Through '71, the question arose, periodically, as to the retention of J. Edgar Hoover as director of the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation]. Part of that was in relation to concerns within the White House, vis-a-vis [John] Mitchell at the Justice Department, on the need for internal security planning. Part of which arose out of leaks and other things that we've been talking about. Hoover was very strongly opposed to any apparatus or effort or program of internal security, in any way, shape, or form, that was not under the control of, and handled totally by, the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

We were talking about things that would not be. We were talking about a coordinated effort between all of the intelligence agencies. President Nixon brought the heads of all the intelligence agencies together to discuss this coordinated effort, which became the "Huston Plan" proposal. Hoover was

violently opposed to it. In his own devious ways, did everything he could to sink it. That lead to the question of Hoover resigning, and so forth. In February of 1971, early in 1971 when that was being discussed--the issue of Hoover being kept on-- Nixon made the point to Mitchell and me that Hoover must be urged, forced, to resign, or be put out of the post, before the end of Nixon's first term. So that Nixon would have the opportunity to appoint the next director of the FBI, in order to preclude a Democratic President, should one end up succeeding Nixon, appointing the next director of the FBI. The concern here is that that one facet of it was primarily political.

The director of the FBI had, under Hoover--I have no idea how the FBI is run today--but Hoover, in his many, many, many years as director of the FBI, accumulated an enormous reservoir of information about an enormous range of subjects and an enormous range of people. Some of his information was very valid, and some of his information was highly questionable. His sources were questionable, in some cases. His methods were questionable, in some cases. His evaluation of information that he had, was questionable, in some cases.

Nonetheless, Nixon, coming into office, had a high regard for J. Edgar Hoover, and an affection for him, and a respect for him. Had every intention, although Hoover was terrified that he was going to be replaced immediately, had every intention of keeping Hoover on as director. I think the first person he told, as President-elect, the first appointment, in effect, that he made, was telling Hoover that he was going to stay on as director

of the FBI. Nixon knew that Hoover knew an awful lot, and that an awful lot of what Hoover knew was valid, as well as some that wasn't. I think he had.... He knew that Hoover could be very helpful in dealing with some of these problems. Hoover was very anxious to be very helpful, as apparently he was with most Presidents, in dealing with whatever problems they had that had security ramifications to them. So, this longtime friendship-- Hoover had been involved with Nixon in the Hiss case and other FBI agents had worked with Nixon in the Hiss case, at Hoover's direction--so, he had a longtime relationship, going way back.

The point that Nixon was getting to, however, in '71, was that it became increasingly clear that Hoover had been in office too long, and was probably older than he should be, in terms of mental age, at least...

RHG: How?

HRH: ...to have that sort of.... I don't know how old he was.

RHG: No, I mean, how was that clear?

HRH: He was showing some signs of incipient senility, or apparent signs of incipient senility. Some of these things I comment on-- his regaling us with tales of all the good old days, and the bad guys, and all of these things--were a little odd. I guess he had always been sort of a different kind of guy. But I think Nixon felt that he had gone a little too far.

This was a delicate situation, though. Hoover had enormous following in the Congress and in the country. He was a public figure with a substantial long, longtime public image. There was a question of the delicacy of having him leave office, and the

need to have him, if he were to leave office, to resign, not to be fired. There was a discussion, in that Spring of '71, with Hoover, about that possibility, and Hoover assured the President that whenever the President wanted him to resign, he would do so. He had full loyalty to the President.

He hated Bobby [Robert] Kennedy and.... He didn't hate Jack [John] Kennedy, as I understand it, but he had no respect for the Kennedy administration. He was a very close ally of Joe [Joseph] Kennedy's, the father. So, he had some ties to the Kennedy boys, but he had intense dislike for Bobby Kennedy. He seemed to have a pretty good rapport with President Johnson, from what he told us. He seemed to have enormous respect, affection, and regard for President Nixon. That may be what he told us, because he knew it was what we wanted to hear. In any event....

The mind-boggling, to you, concept of bringing Hoover onto the White House staff as a counsellor to the President was.... The counsellor to the President role was a very flexible one. It was a high ranking, prestigious post with no pre-described meaning. One could be brought in as a counsellor to the President without having.... What could have been done is, he could have been brought on as a counsellor to the President with very little portfolio, and only as someone to advise the President on matters regarding security and dealing with the various security agencies and security problems, and that sort of thing. I'd forgotten that, but what it was was a way to ease Hoover out of office, as painlessly as possible and maintaining as much dignity and prestige for Hoover as possible, in the

process of doing it. That's what it would be.

A couple of days after that, I see that I have a note: "Hoover will not resign. He feels his departure at this time would be politically damaging." That was, I think, early in the Spring, when Hoover said he would resign whenever the President wanted him to, he said that as a pro forma thing, because he felt that was the proper thing to say to the President on that subject. When the time came to discuss specifically Hoover resigning, Hoover said, "I would not resign now because I feel that would hurt you politically if I were to leave, and I would not want to do that to you." What he was saying was, "You can't kick me out, or it's going to hurt you." [Laughter]

The net [effect] was that the Hoover resignation thing got held up, partly because of Hoover making it difficult, and partly because there were other matters going on that apparently confused things, and I'm not sure what they are. I don't know what the Princeton hearings are that I refer to here in the notes, and I don't know what the Mitchell question is, except [for] the question of whether Mitchell would stay on at Justice, or move over to become campaign manager, which he did. The final upshot was that in the Spring of '72, the problem was solved by Hoover dying. The President then decided to appoint an acting director of the FBI, who was Pat [L. Patrick] Gray.

RHG: Did you say--sorry, I don't know this area too well, but did you say that Mitchell was the one, initially, who wanted to have some kind of a domestic intelligence capability?

HRH: No, I think the President was, but he had Mitchell working it.

RHG: All right. Why...?

HRH: Mitchell, as it turned out, was opposed to it. He was violently opposed to the Huston Plan.

RHG: Why was that?

HRH: I don't know. I don't remember.

RHG: Why did...?

HRH: Maybe because it wasn't under his control. It was White House rather than Justice Department.

RHG: Why did Nixon want to have such a thing in the White House? Why not give it to the FBI?

HRH: Because the FBI was only one agency, and it was an agency that was by statute limited to domestic intelligence, and he saw a need for coordinating domestic and foreign intelligence. There were the problems of the Black Panther insurrection programming and training, and those people were being trained by revolutionaries in Algeria or someplace. There were intermixings in the President's belief, and in Hoover's belief, incidentally, of foreign and domestic intelligence problems and national security problems, that bore on domestic intelligence and domestic security issues. So, like the need for a drug czar, the President felt the need for an intelligence czar, that's when he hauled this meeting together of the Justice Department, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the National Security Agency, the Naval Intelligence and the FBI, and the CIA. He brought all of them in. That's when he said, "I'm tired of...."

RHG: When was that? Can you give me...?

HRH: I'm not sure, but the record shows it. I'm surprised it isn't

here. It has to be probably in the Spring of '70.

RHG: I'll tell you, it probably was classified, and I didn't include anything classified in my notes.

HRH: OK. That's what it is.

RHG: It may be around this June 1970, because here I am asking a general question, and not having anything from the notes, and I suspect that's why.

HRH: Maybe it took place later on, because I see in the August 25th notes, "Also discussed domestic security problem, which Ehrlichman and I had discussed with Mitchell yesterday. The President said I should take it over, because I'm the only one Hoover trusts, and he'll take orders from. Others, especially Mitchell, want it under the Domestic Council, with a staff of intelligence types to evaluate input and order necessary projects. We'll do it one way or the other. In any event, we'll drop the interagency task force approach, which we've started and run into a snag with FBI and Hoover. The main problem there is Tom Huston." So obviously the Huston problem was prior to August, and it had run into the Hoover and Mitchell snag, and Mitchell wants it under the Domestic Council, and the President wants it under the White House, and that's the thing we're bobbling around in there.

The reason for it, he wanted coordinated intelligence. We, the President had this strong feeling that I think he's probably expressed in his own memoirs, that we do not have, did not have, an outstandingly good intelligence capability, either domestic or international. Compared to some of the other nations in the

world we had a poor intelligence capability. Our CIA--he was not satisfied with the CIA's performance. He was not satisfied with the FBI's performance. He was concerned about some of the aberrations in the Hoover dossiers, and so forth, despite his regard for Hoover. That's why--Huston was not supposed to be a czar. Huston was supposed to be a staff person that was the guy that assembled the papers. These people were going to be a commission of their own: the director of CIA, the director of FBI, the director of Naval Intelligence, the director of Defense Intelligence, and the Attorney General. Were going to be a five-point commission that would be the coordinating task force, interagency task force, of which Huston would simply be the staff man.

These people saw it--and probably rightly so--that it would put Huston in a position of enormous potential power, and they weren't about to let him get into it.

RHG: Where did he come from?

HRH: I don't know. He came out of the woodwork, somewhere. He was a Pat Buchanan protege.

RHG: A very young fellow, I take it.

HRH: Yes, pretty young.

RHG: I've heard somebody say--I can't remember where this was--that Huston, at after dinner conversations today, says that the President asked him to do something (that is, draw up some kind of a plan), so he did it, and then, when it became politically very hot and sensitive, it became the "Huston" plan. [Laughter] He says, here he is, essentially a twenty-five year old guy, the

President asks him to make a report. He makes a report, and when it's hot, it's his.

HRH: Well, the reason it became his was not because it was being foisted on him because it had become hot, it was that, as it became hot, it was identified by the press, as the "Huston Plan" because it evolved out of a Huston memorandum to the President. They couldn't put "The Nixon Plan", because there were three thousand Nixon plans. The way to identify it was the "Huston Plan."

And, in effect, it was, in a sense, because he had authored the paper that drew up the plan. He was very much an activist in it. He was not a blushing violet who was drawn, kicking and screaming, into this project. He was, as I recall, an extremely intelligent guy. Very, very bright. Somewhat sort of reclusive, non-sociable, but I didn't really know him very well. I'm quite sure Pat Buchanan brought him into the fold, and I don't know from where.

RHG: Did very much come of all this planning?

HRH: No. It all evaporated, basically.

RHG: Why was that?

HRH: Well.... I don't know. The Huston plan thing got shot down, and I guess the "plumbers unit" sort of sprung up as the de_facto, in-White House thing to deal with this leak and domestic security problem, and I guess it took the place. Being unable, on his first attempt, to get the agencies together in an interagency thing, and given the jurisdictional disputes, I guess the President set up his own thing as the "plumbers unit" in the

White House instead.

RHG: Thank you, Mr. Haldeman.

[End of interview]