Oral history interview with H. R. Haldeman
conducted by Raymond H. Geselbracht
in Mr. Haldeman's home in Santa Barbara, California
on April 13, 1988

RHG: All right, Mr. Haldeman, we're going to discuss the theme from your journal that I've called Nixon's attempt to create a responsive bureaucracy. I've been trying to think in my mind, last night and this morning, how to organize this, and I can't quite manage an organization that I'm satisfied with. The concept is consistent, I think, throughout the things [that] we'll be talking about the next while. My thought is that there are two things involved in creating a responsive bureaucracy. The first is the structure of the government. The second is the people put in positions of responsibility in the government. I've decided, since structure is almost always simpler than people, that I would try looking at that first. See how that works.

During the transition, Roy Ash got a telephone call from either the President, or yourself, I'm not sure whom.

HRH: I'm not sure which, either.

RHG: He was asked to come, be part of the administration, and do something regarding management. Now, for personal reasons, he wasn't able to come at that time. He did agree to come on a part-time, occasional basis, and head up the Ash Commission. As far as he was aware, there was no preparation for this. He didn't really know Nixon, very much, prior to receiving that telephone call. Do you know why Nixon picked him, and what Nixon had in mind for him to do?

HRH: I hadn't realized that Nixon didn't know him. It's quite possible that he didn't; I don't remember that. The main impetus for bringing Ash in was a strong recommendation from Franklin Murphy, who did know Ash very well. [He] had suggested to me that Ash was a superb management structure-type person. If we were getting into areas of review of management structure, [he] would be an outstandingly good person to work with in those areas.

RHG: Please remind me who Franklin Murphy was.

HRH: Franklin Murphy was the chairman of the Times-Mirror Corporation. Had been Chancellor of UCLA [University of California at Los Angeles], and a long-time friend and associate of mine. Strong supporter of the President's, and a person that we had talked to about coming into the Cabinet. Didn't feel he could do that, at the time, so he didn't. He was the one we put on the [President's] Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, so that he was participating from outside.

He was the one who had recommended Ash. I don't know.... It's quite likely that other people did. If the President didn't know him, I'm sure they had a lot of common friends. People that did know both of them. So, it may well have been that he was recommended from other directions, also.

RHG: Do you know what Nixon had in mind for him in the administration?

HRH: I'm not sure at the outset (it's funny, I don't remember), except to work with us on organizational structure. He was involved during the transition period, was he?

RHG: No.

HRH: I didn't think so. This was early in the administration, then.

RHG: Well, I think he received the invitation in December '68, something like that.

HRH: OK. Ultimately, obviously, we set up the Ash Council, which bore his name because he was Chairman of the Council. The purpose of that group was reorganization of the executive branch, looking to overall reorganization on the basis of a legislative proposal to re-structure.

RHG: Why was Nixon interested in this? What were the origins of his interest?

HRH: The origins, at least, and I'm sure there were other participating factors, were primarily his concern that the executive branch had proliferated. He felt there were probably too many Cabinet offices and agencies. It was sort of instinctive. It was not an intensive study that had convinced him of this. It was instinctive, arising from his experience as Vice President, and his observation of the growth of the executive branch under the "Great Society" development, and all that.

So, it was, I think, more a gut feeling than a reasoned, planning kind of thing, that led him to the feeling that we should at least be looking at the concept of reorganization. A little [Herbert] Hoover Commission type-thing--or a big Hoover Commission type-thing. It was along the lines of the reasoning for the Hoover Commission, in much earlier days, which was simply that the.... I think it's a very sound point that, in a general sense, the executive branch--and the legislative branch,

government in totality, really--grows like "Topsy" on a piecemeal basis, rather than a planned basis. Corporations do this, too--big corporations, to some extent--but not to the same degree, I don't think. I think corporations have a continuing, long-range plan, generally, and they are working along the lines of that plan. When they add or lop off segments of their structure, it's, at least to some degree, in accord with that long-range plan.

With the governmental apparatus--certainly the executive branch, which changes every four years, or every eight years, and sometimes more often, because of circumstances--a lot of its structure is dictated by legislative action that is not directly responsive, and may not even be in any way in accord with executive branch intent, or program[s], at any given time. Plus, each new President coming in--and the executive branch is the President, from the Constitutional viewpoint--each new executive branch, therefore, starts its life on Inauguration Day with inheriting all of the apparatus and structure of its predecessor, and accumulation of previous predecessors. Is not dealing with a structure that if, given its own druthers, might necessarily have put together. Inevitably, also, because of the Congressional, and sometimes the Presidential, tendency to throw a new agency, or a new Department, or a new commission, or something, together to deal with each new problem as it comes along, these things get created. There's no established procedure for [dissolving] them, in many cases, if not all cases. Therefore, they acquire lives of their own. The problem that they were created to deal with

may well have gone away twenty years ago, but the commission is still going on. The big ludicrous example was the tea-taster operation that everybody used to use, that is a minor point, but it applies in major points.

These agencies, Departments, segments of Cabinet Departments, Cabinet Departments in totality, tend to come and go on an irrational, ad hoc basis. They tend to come more than they go. I think there really is a need--a very valid need--for what I would suggest is some kind of zero-based budgeting sort of concept. Something that requires, on some sort of periodic basis, a review of all government. Executive branch at least, and I would say legislative, because I think the staff and committee growth in the legislative side is worse than on the executive branch side, but that's based on prejudice, not knowledge, really. I think there should be a review. There should be a look at, "Do we really need all these things?"

The most constructive way to approach it might well be a zero-based thing. In other words, we don't have any agencies now. What agencies do we need? Then, given a definition of what we need to deal with what we are dealing with today, what of the existing structure fits that need, and what doesn't? What could be modified to fit it? Then get rid of everything else. That's in effect what we were--that's oversimplifying it vastly--but what we were trying to accomplish with the approach of the Ash Council, with the original concept of the need to reorganize.

RHG: So a newly elected President comes into office and he confronts a governmental structure that is likely to be both inefficient, and

structured in such a way to accomplish the goals of his predecessor.

HRH: Right.

RHG: Do you know how focused Nixon's thoughts were? Was it a general feeling?

HRH: I would say it was general. I'm sure there were, in his mind, specifics. I don't recall what they were. I don't know that his writings, or anyone else's spell them out, but they may very well. I think the impetus was more on a general basis than on a specific basis. I don't think he had any specific thing in mind that should be added or taken away, but rather, a general feeling, as I've just articulated, that there were lots of things there that we didn't need anymore, and some that were counterproductive. Many that were wasteful, and questionably, some that were useful. He wanted all that evaluated.

RHG: There's a [Haldeman] journal entry, February 6, 1969, right in the beginning of the Presidency: "Nixon spent an hour with Roy Ash, who agreed at that time to head the Ash Council." You say, "The President really wants to accomplish something on re-organization, and has great faith in Ash-type's ability to do so, but doesn't exactly know how."

HRH: That reflects Nixon's.... It's interesting. Nixon is not a natural manager, and he's not a skilled manager even when he tries to be, or tries to learn how to be. He didn't realize that in the early parts of his career. Most people don't. Most people don't analyze themselves to determine whether they're managers or not. They simply go ahead with trying to deal with

whatever task faced them. Nixon, having been a lawyer, and lawyers are traditionally notoriously bad managers, simply because the skills that make one a good lawyer are not the same skills that make one a good manager, in many cases. Consequently, people who have lawyer's skills tend to become lawyers, and people who have managerial skills tend to become managers. Nixon became a lawyer. He became, early on in his career, a political lawyer--a politician. Running for Congress as a young man. Even in a lot of his lawyer days, working in a government agency, the OPA [Office of Price Administration], not as a lawyer, but as a low-level government bureaucrat. Then became an elected government official, as a Congressman, then a Senator, then Vice President.

The only managerial tasks that presented themselves to him during that time were managing political campaigns, his own. He proved himself to be a bad political campaign manager, without realizing it. I think analysis of the '60 election, his first national, major, big campaign that required real managerial skill, when he ran for President, suffered badly from his insistence on managing the campaign himself. Thereby, violating one step removed, an adage that lawyers use, which is that the laywer who handles his own case has a fool for a client. One could extend that concept to the political candidate who manages his own campaign has a fool for a client. He didn't realize that, but I think a lot of the analysis of the '60 campaign was that although Len [Leonard] Hall and Bob [Robert] Finch were co-managers of the campaign, the real manager of the campaign was

Richard Nixon. And the campaign was, because of that, in many instances, not well managed.

I don't know whether consciously, or subconsciously, Nixon came to realize that, but he did. To a degree, he did not manage the [1962] California campaign, totally himself. He did let me do some of the campaign management in California. Not a lot, and he still was strongly a factor in campaign management in California, but by 1968, when he was to run again for President, he had a clear recognition--and it may have evolved out of his years as a practicing lawyer in New York.... Because he was a practicing lawyer at the high level in New York, he was dealing with big-time business management, for the first time in his life, on an ongoing, business basis, rather than as a politician, who had to deal with big-time managers vis-a-vis their political interests, but not their managerial interests.

I think he came to realize, more clearly, during those New York lawyer years, that there are people who are good managers and people who aren't. The people who aren't, are very wise to hire people who are, to do their managing for them. That's traditionally what is done. That's exactly what he did in the '68 campaign. He decided he shouldn't, and couldn't, and wouldn't, therefore, manage his own campaign, and brought John Mitchell in as the campaign manager. John Mitchell did, in fact, manage the campaign. That flies in the face of an earlier part of my thesis that lawyers aren't good managers, because John Mitchell was a lawyer.

John Mitchell proved to be a good campaign manager. He had

a good organizational sense. Also, he had the willingness to bring in other managerially oriented type people, and let them manage their segments of the campaign. So, that translated, through that experience, in the campaign being successful, into recognition that relinquishing management was a good thing, on Nixon's part. I think that, for a non-manager, he had some interesting managerial instincts, or insights, way back deep in him, that led him to realize that there were skills, talents, and insights, approaches, to managing that he didn't have, but that other people did have. When I said, "He has great faith in Ash-type's ability," I'm using Ash as a prototype. Roy Ash, a skilled manager. He was the chief executive officer of Litton [Industries, Inc.], which was a very complex conglomerate. The whole skill in conglomerating, and existing as a conglomerate, is managerial skill.

That's what Franklin Murphy was saying. This is a man who knows how to manage. He's not a politician; he's a manager. If you need management skill, Roy Ash prototypically would be what you should be looking for. So we went right to Roy Ash. Nixon, I think [partly] because of my views on the subject, and I'm sure others who had talked with him about management, and led him to have a much better understanding that there was a difference between a good manager and a bad manager, was ready to turn to management-skilled people to work out management problems. It's the reason he made me be the manager of the White House staff. He did not try to manage it. He gave me the problems, the assignments, the tasks, the responsibilities, and the

authorities, and then said, "Manage it." Admittedly, as this indicates, he got into his dissatisfactions with various results on a very specific basis, and then prescribed, frequently, his view as to what the management solution to that dissatisfaction was. But he didn't try to get into managing it himself. He was willing to step back, and let someone else run it.

On the reorganization thing he recognized that it was management skill that had to bring about the reorganization. He had the political insight to know the structure and the system was wrong, he felt, in various ways. He had the managerial insight to realize he didn't know how to make it right, but that it had to be made right. That's really precisely what I said here. "He has faith in Ash-type's ability to do so, but doesn't exactly know how." He didn't know how Ash was going to do it.

Just like you can compare it to your going to a dentist. You have faith in the dentist's ability to fix what's wrong with your tooth, but you don't know how he's going to go about doing it. Or the auto mechanic's ability to fix your engine. Even though you haven't the foggiest notion of how to do it. You know the engine's not working right, because the car's coughing, or not starting, or whatever the problem is. You don't know why--at least I don't, because I'm not a mechanic. I have no mechanical inclination, so I go to a garage and say, "My car doesn't work." He figures out why not, and does something about it. I come back and drive it away, and it's working. I've got a toothache, I don't why, but I go to the dentist. He does something to my tooth, and I come home without a toothache anymore. That's what

[the President] was looking for. A dentist or a mechanic. Somebody to put the car back together so it would run right. That's what he saw Ash as, what the whole reorganization concept was about, in simplistic terms.

Why did he have such faith in Ash? Simply because of what at least I had told him, and I'm sure others had, about Roy Ash. Plus, simply the fact that Ash.... [The President] had a lot more faith in me, in a lot of ways, after I was appointed as a Regent of the University of California, because it was a verification to him of the recognition by other people of importance and vision, and so forth, that I had some abilities that he thought I had, too, but this sort of endorsed that thought. The fact that Ash was chief executive officer of Litton--he knew about Litton, he knew the company, he knew [Charles] "Tex" Thornton, who was the co-founder with Ash of Litton. Ash had the record as one of the whiz kids under [Robert] McNamara at Ford [Motor Company], prior to coming into the Litton thing. So, he had credentials that were easily understood by Nixon. They were like the dentist's degree--his DDS--that sits up on his wall when he went in. Or the mechanic's certification that he's a certified GM [General Motors] "Mr. Goodwrench", or whatever it is. So that the credentials were there, and the stature, the accomplishment. Ash had accumulated a substantial personal fortune. Not as an entrepreneur, but as a manager. So, it was those kinds of things that gave him the faith in it and his interest in doing it.

My part in all this was one of encouraging the thing. I

had, as a managerial type person, a strong insight--which I later, in working on the theoretical side of management, right now on a current basis--have seen validated in conceptual and methodological terms. The key to management is, first, to have a proper stucture. Secondly, to have a process by which that structure works, that is well adjusted to the structure, to the needs. Then, to have the people to carry out the process within the structure. In good management technqiue, you start with structure, go then to process, and then to people. You don't start with people and try to build around them. So, that's where we were, at that point.

RHG: One of the first recommendations that the Ash Council made regarding the Executive Office of the President, and I think there was more than one set of recommendations regarding the Executive Office. I think the first one involved the Domestic Council and the Office of Management and Budget. The Domestic Council idea, as we've discussed in the last two days, is one that seemed to grow, organically, as it were, out of the personalities and the circumstances that existed within the administration in its earliest days. Yet the Domestic Council ended up as being a formal recommendation of the Ash Council. How did Ash and the White House staff work out this proposal? Where was the origin of the idea there?

HRH: I'm not sure--and I don't know that anybody knows, even Roy Ash--precisely where the origin is. It's like a lot of things in the advertising business, there's always the question would arise, "Who's idea was that great slogan?" or "that great name for the

product?", or "that great campaign?" You don't know. Those things evolve, and the precision of whose idea it was, is often impossible to pinpoint. I don't know, on this. Someone else may, and I wouldn't question anybody else's better knowledge in that. The fact of the matter, from my viewpoint, was that the Ash Council was.... They did a lot of talking to people within the executive branch, so they were getting input and feedback from our people, and from the bureaucracy--the career people in these various areas--that would give them readings on what the status of things was, and how they worked and so forth, and how they didn't work.

The membership on the Ash Council was such that there was a lot of insight already built in. [Dean George] Baker, from Harvard Business School, was one member of the Council. John Connally was a member of the Council, a former Governor and former Undersecretary of the Navy. There were a couple of other members. It was originally Ash, Baker, and Connally, and I wanted to call it the "ABC" Council, but then other names were added and they couldn't limit the name to the three. So, they called it the Ash Council, because Roy was the chairman. The people there had their own insights from their own experiences and analysis and exposures, and then they did research. They had a staff, and the staff did accumulated proposals and analyses, and that sort of thing. Out of that, there obviously was input from our people, who at the same time were in the staff meetings with me we've talked about earlier, in which this concept of a Domestic Council of some sort was evolving. Whether that came

from us, and the Ash Council adopted it, or whether it came from the Ash Council and we adopted it, or whether it came from general discussion, or within the bureaucracy, the career staff itself, I don't know.

The fact of the matter is, that clearly we were on parallel paths, the Ash Council here, and our operating senior staff here, in some of these ideas, at least. We were in agreement. That was important. It was recognized by the Ash Council that what they came up with had to be doable, so they were looking at what is possible as they were going along, also. Not just what's desirable.

RHG: My guess, from what I've seen in your notes and in your journal and elsewhere, would be that [John] Ehrlichman's position, because of all the things we talked about yesterday, evolved into a domestic policy advisor-like position, and that the Ash Council gave the idea a bit more formalization and definition. That would be my guess.

HRH: I think that's basically right. I would tend to categorize Ehrlichman not as a domestic policy advisor, however, in the sense of looking to his expertise for advice. Rather as the director or staff leader of the Domestic Council. It was the Council that was generating the advice, or the sub-committees within the Council that were generating the substance of the advice. Ehrlichman's task, primarily--he did have an advisory role, obviously, and he did have a viewpoint (he had experience in some areas of domestic policy things that qualified him very strongly to have a viewpoint). But conceptually it was that the

Council was what was looked to as the advisor, or the individuals that composed the Council as advisors in specific areas, and so forth. John's job was a staff function of coordinating, implementing, and bringing to fruition the Council's work.

RHG: Do you know the origin of the other half of that proposal, which was the Office of Management and Budget? What was it that was lacking in the Bureau of the Budget, and who saw the lack?

HRH: My view is, and again, I would willingly stand to be corrected by others more knowledgeable, but my view of that is that that did come out of the Ash Council, per se. I don't know who, what individuals within the Council, but that was the result of Ash Council observation and development. I assume that it arose out of their analysis of the then Budget Bureau, and how it worked and what it did. It's my understanding from conversations I had at the time with Roy Ash, primarily, because I did not meet with the Ash Council, as such, but I did talk with Roy quite a bit, as he was moving along through the process. Ash's view, and I assume it was the Council's view, was that the Budget Bureau, as such, was simply a huge bureaucratic apparatus that collated a budget. It didn't provide the kind of value to the executive that a budget can provide as a control mechanism, as well as a financial mechanism. As a management control mechanism.

A good manager uses a corporate budget, not just as a financial tool, but as a management tool. It's a method of control, and Ash saw it as a very valid, as I understand it, method of control of the executive branch by the President, were it to be structured more with a managerial orientation than a

financial orientation. By looking at it from a managerial view, then you can manage by budget, in a lot of ways. You set budgets, and you require that monies be spent. That's in a sense what Congress tries to do in it's exercise of it's Constitutional responsibility for appropriation, which is to set the amount to be spent, and thereby establish and manage the programs that the government is carrying out.

That was a radical change. The domestic policy council was a bringing together--it was a purely structural thing of bringing together some people to try and do better what they were doing independently, already. The concept of changing the Budget Bureau to the Office of Management and Budget, and I think from the note here, and it confirms my recollection, that the original proposal was an Office of Executive Management. Tradition and Congressional reality and a lot of other things caused that to be modified to become the Office of Management and Budget, which it is today--the OMB, rather than the Office of Executive Management, an OEM--because it was breaking too much of the existing structure to, in effect, destroy the Budget Bureau and create a new Bureau. Rather, it was evolved that the Budget Bureau was expanded, let's say. Revised, revamped, in order to become not only what it already was, a financial budgeting entity, but also a management control entity. The name reflected that combination where it was therefore a less radical, and I think, not only in name, but in actual content, the OMB structure was a less radical change than the Ash Council's original OEM concept.

RHG: As I remember, it just says in an aside there was some discussion of your becoming the first director of OMB.

HRH: Right. There was. That was, I forget whose idea it was. It was certainly not mine. It was an idea that I obviously considered, because it was intriguing, because it was the managerial job for the executive branch that was an intriguing challenge. I opted not to do it. I don't know that it was ever offered to me; it was suggested, and I shot down the suggestion, I guess is [a] more accurate way to put it.

My reason for not wanting to do it was that I felt I was better, more uniquely qualified to function as the President's chief of staff, in the sense that I had worked so closely with him for so long. Understood how to work with him and how he worked, and so on, and that I could perform a more unique service there. There were many good managers, better qualified than I, to run the OMB. There were few, if any, people as well qualified as I to function as Richard Nixon's chief of staff. I don't mean by that.... I specifically say "President Nixon's chief of staff," because I don't think I would have been well qualified, at all, to serve as either President [Lyndon] Johnson's or President [Gerald] Ford's chief of staff. My qualification was based on the personal knowledge of Nixon, and my ability to work with his way of working, and my rapport with most of his general conceptual thinking, which I would not have found that I had with either Ford on one side or Johnson on the other. Or, one step earlier, [Dwight] Eisenhower, or [John] Kennedy, and a couple of steps later, with [Jimmy] Carter, or.... [Ronald] Reagan I might

have. I might have been a good chief of staff for Reagan, because I had also worked with him, out here in California. I knew how he worked. Very differently than Nixon, but I think I could have worked with that, in many ways, as well as I could have worked, and did work, with Nixon.

RHG: Can you briefly characterize the ways in which the two men worked differently?

HRH: What two?

RHG: Nixon and Reagan.

HRH: Nixon and Reagan? Nixon, first of all, was a consummate politician. Reagan is a consummate performer. Nixon understood the give and take of politics. Reagan did not. Nixon understood the concepts of most things are gray. Very few are either black or white. Reagan, consistently, used to get furious about anybody talking about, "This is in the gray area." He said, "There is no gray area. It's either this, or it's that. It's either black or it's white. It's either right or it's wrong. It isn't sort of right, or sort of wrong. It's either pregnant, or it isn't pregnant. There is no half way."

Nixon had a totally different conceptual approach that way. Reagan was much more willing to rely on the substance produced by others. Nixon was much more involved in substance. Reagan was much better at presentation, in a personal way, than Nixon was, although Nixon, in a substantive way, I think was better than Reagan. He knew his subject. Reagan studies hard and does a good job at press conferences, as long as it stays within his area of study. Nixon studied hard. Nixon prepared for press

conferences carefully, too. But, you could come up with something from totally left field with Nixon, and he could handle it with the same skill that he handled something that he was fully prepared on. Reagan is not able to do that.

It sort of boils down to the thing [Franklyn] Nofziger said, which I still think is right: if we'd had my man's [Nixon's] brains, and his man's [Reagan's] appeal, charisma, personality, we would have had the perfect President. I think I could have, recognizing that, worked with either one of them. They share a lot of common principles and internal gut instincts, as to what's right and what's wrong, what should be done, what should not be done. Reagan doesn't have anything like Nixon's grasp of global geopolitics, and his, therefore, creative contribution to that. Putting that in one framework, the Nixon-[Henry] Kissinger relationship was totally dominated by Nixon, with Kissinger as a very strong adjunct to the Nixon foreign policy development and implementation. If Kissinger had been at the same stage of his existence, pre-Nobel Prize, working with Reagan as President, I think Kissinger would have totally dominated both the creation and the implementation of policy, with Reagan's oversight and consent and agreement. Active, but not with his input, other than as the basic principle: Communism is bad, and democracy is good. There they stand, clear. But the nuances of how to evolve and develop and work would have come totally from Henry, I think, and not from President Reagan. Where with Nixon, they came initially from Nixon, very much in tune with Henry, and aided and abetted and implemented and expanded by Henry.

RHG: When and where did you work with Reagan?

HRH: In California, I was a Regent of the University. As president of the alumni association, therefore ex officio, I spent two years on the Board of Regents, and became very active--and loved working on the Board of Regents--during that time. At the end of the two years, I was no longer a member, because my post as alumni president had expired. At that time Reagan was getting ready to run for Governor. I, as well as a lot of people involved in the University, [was] concerned, that Reagan's view of the University was distorted by some of his black-and-white positions, and that he might be a detrimental Governor, to the University. Whereas Pat [Edmund] Brown had been a very beneficial Governor to the University--and he really had been. He had a very good appreciation of the value of the University to the state, and therefore was very helpful in the University's growth. There was concern that Reagan might not be, and that Reagan probably would win. I shared that concern. It was concern by Democrats and Republicans, not a political concern. It was a substantive interest in the University concern.

Because I did, I established contact with some of Reagan's people, a lot of whom I knew well. And I knew Reagan--not well--but I knew him. Established contact, and said that I would like to be helpful to the candidate, and his people--the staff, whoever was working on it--in developing his insights and views on the University of California. I prepared some papers and did some work with them to try and expand his view, as I was afraid it might be narrow, on the University. As a result of that,

after he was elected Governor, and because there were a number of the people on the Board of Regents, both Democrats and Republicans (appointed Regents, not ex officio), who felt that I had been a good Regent in the time that I had been there. Who, and this is what happens within that sort of thing, made it known to the new Governor and his people that they thought I would be a good appointed Regent, which was at that time a 16-year appointment. Was considered, and still is, the most prestigious appointment that the Governor of California can make, other than possibly the Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court.

In any event, there were no regental appointments available to the Governor immediately upon his taking office, but he recognized my contribution to the campaign in the sense of some position analysis on the University, and this other activity on my behalf, let's say, for regental appointment. So, he appointed me to the Coordinating Council for Higher Education, which was the state board assigned to the implementation of the master plan for higher education in California, which is a unique plan that assigns and monitors the roles of the University of California, the state colleges, and the community colleges. The three segments of the public higher education system in the state. I served on the Coordinating Council for awhile, and then when the first regental appointments came up, I was one of the first two Regents that Reagan appointed to 16-year terms on the Board.

I then served with him on the Board of Regents, and he looked to me as his sort of pro counsel vis-a-vis the University of California, to a great degree, and I spent quite a little time

with him on guidance on regental matters. At Regents meetings and in between and so forth, until I left to go into the Federal Government.

RHG: Thank you. I know that was an aside, but you've been in a very special position to see both these two major Presidents at work, and I appreciated that.

HRH: Yeah. I have, of course, not worked at all with Reagan as a President. My time with him was as a candidate and as Governor of California. When I went into the White House, of course, Reagan was still Governor of California. We still had some rapport, and there was communication back and forth. Reagan was a very supportive Governor of President Nixon, and we maintained strong ties during that time. Although he was very disappointed that I had decided to resign from the Board of Regents. I think he felt I let him down on that, because he thought I should have kept the job as people earlier had. Fred [Frederick] Dutton, who had been appointed by Brown, stayed on the Board of Regents even while he was on the White House staff, with President Kennedy, and I think also with President Johnson. Bill [William] Roth, also had Federal posts, but stayed on the Board of Regents as an appointed Regent.

I felt there was a conflict of interest, first of all, because one-third of the funding of the University comes from the Federal Government. I also felt there was a conflict of interest on a personal basis in just allocation of time. Regental work, to do it right, takes a lot of time, and I could see I wasn't going to have time available.

RHG: At the time that the OMB plan was formulated, Robert Mayo was the Director of the Bureau of the Budget. He and Nixon did not have a very good rapport, as I understand. Can you describe that just a little bit? Then, there was a problem with forming an Office of Management and Budget, and having Mayo as its first Director, and maybe you could describe that, too.

HRH: Well, my recollection.... Going back to the Mayo background, Bob Mayo was, as you say, Nixon's first appointment as director of the Budget Bureau. That was an appointment that Nixon was not, at the outset, particularly happy with. Mayo was not really a Nixon appointment, he was a Kennedy appointment. Not John Kennedy, David Kennedy, the Secretary of the Treasury. As I recall, it was almost a quid pro quo. Kennedy was a highly desired appointment as Secretary of the Treasury, and, I think that Kennedy almost put a condition upon his acceptance. That condition being, that Mayo be appointed director of the Budget Bureau, because he, as Secretary of the Treasury, wanted a Budget Director that he was simpatico with. As I recall, the two of them were associated in their banking careers prior to coming into the government. I may be wrong on some of that, but that's my recollection.

As a result, Mayo was not a Nixon person, from Nixon's viewpoint. He was a Kennedy person, a David Kennedy person, who had come in because Kennedy wanted him there, not because Nixon had any strong feeling he wanted him there. He became a disputative, argumentative Budget Director, rather than a cooperative Budget Director. He had some sort of petty

characteristics that didn't ingratiate him to the President. He seemed very much concerned with his own position and prerogatives and all that sort of thing, rather than with the substance of getting his job done.

[End cassette one, side one]

[Begin cassette one, side two]

HRH: We were talking about Mayo as the original Budget Director who was going to be the head of the new Office of Executive Management, which became the Office of Management and Budget. Mayo was not the first choice, and was not a welcome choice, to head the new office, because nobody felt, I don't think--the Ash Council people, the Nixon administration people, or anybody else felt--that he was the person you would really want to run this new office. He was not a managerial type. He did not have the scope or the breadth of vision or the stature, or anything else, to really bring to the new OMB what was contemplated.

The problem was, that the first step was to.... The natural question would be, "Then, why would you put him in to run it?" The answer is, because the first problem was to get the new Bureau born, get it through Congress, and into place. It was recognized, by the Ash Council, and by us, and by [Bryce] Harlow, in working through his schmoozing to see how getting ready to get this change put through, that it was going to be hard to do. That there was a strong level of resistance within the bureaucracy, and a bureaucracy expressing its views through the Congressional staffs to the Congress, to making this change. Because, it was going to break some china, it was going to change

lines of communication. It was going to change the vision and the mission of the Budget Bureau, substantially, and the Budget Bureau was a device the Congress used, and Congressional committees used, to work their will, in many ways. It was seen that this was going to break that up. That was one of the objectives, as a matter of fact. That objective was clearly understood by some of those who thought they were going to be disabled, or disadvantaged, by it.

So, one factor in making this change that might make it easier was seen to be the maintenance of the present Director. In other words, not to change the personnel of the Bureau. Make the change in structure. Going back to the structure, process, and people thing. Make the change in structure, but leave the people question [for the] end, not to fight both battles at once. Not to fight the battle of structural change and also, try to get confirmed a new Director at the same time, but rather to take one bite at a time. The first bite being, get the new office set up, but leave Bob Mayo as the Director, or the Chairman, or whatever it would be--the chief executive--of it at the outset, with the understanding internally, at least, that that was not going to continue. I think that we were, as I recall, a little bit Machiavellian in that thing in the sense that I don't think we told Mayo that that was our intent.

I think we felt--another problem was that Mayo, as the Director of the Budget Bureau, was not in favor of the change, because it was changing his empire, and he didn't like that. To change him too, would have made him an active opponent of the

change of the structure, and he might have been a very effective active opponent as the incumbent. So, that was seen as undesirable, too. It was seen that a way of buying his support, perhaps, was saying that we wanted him to be the Director of the new thing, so that was the approach that was used. And that was the reason for it.

RHG: In March 1970, as I recall, President Nixon delivered an address to Congress in which he outlined the plan. I think he was sending the legislation to Congress to approve the reorganization plan that approved the Domestic Council and the Office of Management and Budget. I don't have the wording with me, but in that address he made a very clear demarcation between the areas of responsibility of the Domestic Council and the Office of Management and Budget. The words were something like this: that the Domestic Council was to be concerned with the formulation of domestic policy. The Office of Management and Budget was to be concerned essentially with the implementation and management of domestic policy. Ehrlichman, of course, became the first Domestic Council--I don't know what his title was, head of the operating part of the Domestic...

HRH: I think he was the Director of the Council.

RHG: ...Council, and George Shultz and Caspar Weinberger became the Director and Deputy Director of Office of Management and Budget.

HRH: That was later on, though, after Mayo left obviously.

RHG: Yes, I don't remember when Mayo left. I just don't recall.

HRH: He was still around in March of '70.

RHG: Yeah. Well, the Office of Management and Budget didn't actually

become in place in law until July 1970.

HRH: Oh, OK.

RHG: Can you describe a bit how particularly Shultz and Weinberger fell into place, and how they began undertaking their positions. How they related with John Ehrlichman, and whether or not the clear demarcation that the President had set out, in his address in March, was in fact followed.

HRH: I can't very well, because I don't have good recollections in the mechanics of that, because it was an evolutionary process, in which I was not directly involved--I was peripherally involved in that along with everything else. The delineation that the President made in the thing that you're talking about, I'm sure, came from the Ash Council's recommendation as to how the thing should be structured. He was simply making his statement on that basis. That, I guess, in March, was probably at the time we launched the program to make the change. It had to go through Congress, and the change was not made until July [of 1970]. In that process, the evolution--because even though it wasn't statutorily changed, we were, as we've talked about earlier--from a staff viewpoint, we were moving toward Ehrlichman taking more responsibility, or taking <u>the</u> responsibility, for a domestic policy unit. While that wasn't statutorily or officially established, let's say, that <u>de facto</u>, steps were being taken in that direction, and we were working on that kind of a basis. That gave rise to--I know I had a note in March of '70, and I don't know whether that was before or after the President's March speech regarding the reorganization, but a note that the

President had a terrible session with Bob Mayo, in a meeting that day, in which Mayo had launched into a very petty kind of a diatribe against Ehrlichman. The diatribe was on precisely the point that you've raised, that Mayo and Ehrlichman had reached a complete impasse on the question of where policy was to be made.

Mayo's contention was that the Budget Bureau, or what was going to become the Office of Executive Management, cannot be divorced from policy development. Mayo was trying to maintain his status and his position in the process of development as well as of implementation. The President's feeling about that, afterwards, was that the real problem was that Mayo doesn't realize that policy has to be controlled by the President's men--policy development--because it's the President's policy that's being developed. The President's men are not the people of the Budget Bureau. The Budget Bureau is basically a career staff of people who are not the President's men. What the President didn't realize in making that point is that the concept of shifting to the Office of Management and Budget was that you would shift that concept of the Budget Bureau to where it became more of a President's men--an organization more focused on development and implementation of the President's policy, but delineated.... Development came from the Council, and implementation came from the Bureau, or Office. You need the President's men in the implementation side, too, but you certainly need them in the policy development side. That was an issue, an issue that was battled as we went through that period.

A week after this first unpleasant session with Mayo that I

was just talking about, where Mayo turned the heat on Ehrlichman, I had a talk with Mayo, I'm sure at the President's direction. It was the kind of thing where when the President got into unpleasant relationships with people in his government, he usually turned them over to someone else to handle, and I know I got the Mayo problem to handle. I talked to Mayo, and my conclusion from that talk was that Mayo's real problem was a purely personal, ego kind of thing. It wasn't a question of which was right and which was wrong substantively. It was how much power, posture, position did Bob Mayo have. Mayo's concern even went, in my view, to a paranoiac concept. He was convinced that Ehrlichman was obsessed with a determination to acquire total control over the government. Knowing Ehrlichman, I knew that was not the case at all. What Ehrlichman was doing was carrying out what the President had told him he wanted done, in the way the President wanted it done. Mayo was really caught up in his own ego problem and his concern about his own status. It was that personal thing....

I think it's important to cover some of these things, because I think it's important for people in the long haul, as they look at government, to recognize that government is a group of people. Like a corporation, or a church, or a school, or anything else, those people are human beings with human talents and abilities, and human foibles and frailties. Those that come into government, maybe more than others, tend to have some of these ego problems. That may be the reason that a man who can earn a lot more money, and live a much more comfortable life,

with a lot less pressure, outside in the business world, gives that up and comes into government. There's no question that most of the people who do that are primarily motivated by a desire to be of service. They feel they can make a real contribution to the benefit of the nation and the world. That's their basic motivation, I really believe that. I believe that's true of most of the people in the bureaucracy, also. In the terms of political appointees--the people of this kind that we're talking about--there is also, I'm sure, in many of them, an ego gratification and status building kind of thing that is also a part of their motivation.

There's no question in my mind that it was in terms of Bob Mayo, who was an unheard of, unknown person in the banking world, who had shot into great fame. With a guy like Governor [George] Romney, he didn't gain any fame by becoming a Cabinet officer. I don't think there was an ego thing involved in his doing it. It was an ongoing development in his career of public service. Other people did get ego boosts from it, and Bob Mayo certainly was one of them. That was part of the problem. That's again a diversion, but it's a point that I think you've got to recognize. We tend to think that people go into government and become different than they were before they went in. Obviously, everybody does become different. Any one of us becomes different as we go into any new job, but our basic character is the same. Our basic motivations and our basic way of working and way of thinking changes some, but it doesn't change totally. We aren't different people. We are different, but we aren't totally

different people, when we come into government, or when we come out. We learn and progress all the way along, but you've got to recognize that there are human imperfections in all human beings, and those are going to be reflected in the human beings in government as well as the human beings outside. You can't expect perfection. You can't expect everybody--or anybody--in government to do everything right, with the purest of motives, at all times, with flawless execution, and judgment that's absolutely unimpaired in every respect. It isn't going to happen. You might as well be ready and expect the imperfections, and be prepared to deal with them, without getting unduly excited about the fact that they exist, because they're going to be there.

RHG: One of the most unforgettable proverbs produced by the Nixon administration was on this topic. It's in your journal; I've also seen it in Ehrlichman's notes. I'm not sure of the period. Roy Ash, speaking to things like the Bob Mayo problem, said, "It's all right to be a prima donna if you can sing." [Laughter] Mayo couldn't sing.

HRH: That's right. That's exactly right. On the other hand, [Daniel Patrick] Moynihan could sing, so he could be a prima donna.

RHG: And [Henry] Kissinger.

HRH: Kissinger could sing, so he could be a prima donna.

RHG: Kissinger could sing a beautiful song, on occasion.

HRH: In his own way, Ash could sing, so he could be a prima donna. [John] Connally could sing, so he could be a prima donna. That's a good point.

RHG: How did [George] Shultz and [Caspar] Weinberger divide the responsibilities at OMB when they came into place? Did either one of them satisfy the basic concept that OMB was created to produce, that is, an agency that used the budget to manage?

HRH: Shultz came in as Director; Weinberger as Deputy Director. Shultz moved to that post from Secretary of Labor, which was his initial post in the administration.

RHG: And Weinberger from FTC [Federal Trade Commission].

HRH: Weinberger had come in originally as Chairman of the FTC and moved over to Budget from there. Weinberger had been [Ronald] Reagan's budget director, prior to that. Right--or wrong? Right, I think.

RHG: Yes.

HRH: Because he stayed in the Federal Government after he came in, didn't he? I think he had....

RHG: Yes. He had been, for a brief while, I think, what's called the Finance Director in California, for Reagan. Then he came to the Federal Trade Commission position. Stayed only about six months. Judging from your journal, was not happy to leave FTC after that short an amount of time. I was rather surprised, actually, that Nixon felt so strongly about him--that is, wanting to bring him into the administration. I would have thought he may have been somewhat suspect as a Reagan person.

HRH: No, no. Weinberger was a Nixon man, who, if you wanted to be surprised, be surprised that Reagan took him into his administration, not that Nixon did. Weinberger was Republican State Chairman or something like that at the time that Nixon ran

for Governor. He was very much involved in the gubernatorial campaign. I worked very closely with Cap during that time. He would have been a.... He was very highly regarded by.... He was State Chairman. A guy named Joe [Joseph] Martin was the National Committeeman. They were the two political party leaders in the state of California at the time Nixon ran for Governor. Weinberger very definitely was a Nixon man.

He was a San Francisco lawyer, but also interested in politics. He had run or had been in Congress or in the State legislature at some point.

RHG: That's right.

HRH: So he'd had some political background, on that basis. Cap was definitely regarded as a Nixon man. It was not at all surprising. He was a talented.... He's a brilliant man. Very good mind. An astute politician, in many ways. He was brought into the Nixon administration as a part of the talent hunt for good people. He probably came into the FTC because it was probably something he said he wanted to do. I don't remember why he was appointed to the FTC, but I suspect that was probably it. He was not seen, at that time, as Cabinet level, but was seen as real talent for development and movement upward, within the administration.

George Shultz had come into Labor from a position on the faculty of the Business School at the University of Chicago. Was regarded as a.... Nixon did not know Shultz, at all, but he was extremely highly recommended by people that Nixon highly respected. I don't remember who, but I know that Shultz was

regarded as a real saint. "If we can get George Shultz in the administration, that would be a real coup." But he came in under the cloak of an academician, of a business school faculty. I forget what his labor qualifications were; there must have been some, labor relations, or something, qualifications that qualified him to.... He was, wasn't he, Secretary of Labor? Am I right, or am I wrong?

RHG: Yes. No, that's my memory, too.

HRH: That was his first appointment. I think that's right. Because then we made--the second appointment was a much more labor oriented guy, the guy that replaced Shultz. George, I think, was seen as a good candidate for the OMB-type of position because of his business school training, and his, therefore, academic qualifications as a business manager--as a student of business management. That's what we were looking for was bringing the disciplines of business management into the OMB. Obviously, Shultz has gone on from there to a fantastic career in a wide range of government posts.

I think he was seen as a very good person for OMB, and I think Cap was seen as someone who would bring a strong political orientation, a recognition from his legislative experience in California and his finance department experience in California, a recognition of the interrelationship between government, finance, and legislature. Executive, legislative, and the world of finance--financial management and planning. They were seen as a very good pair to bring in, counterbalancing each other. One from the Midwest and one from California, and with different

kinds of vision and scope, but both highly qualified, highly capable men, as individuals.

RHG: Did Shultz satisfy the management part of OMB's mandate during his directorshp?

HRH: I think partly; I don't think totally. I'm not sure anybody could have, totally. I think he got it off to a good start. It would be interesting to get Roy Ash's view on this, because he was the one that had the concept, and I'm not sure, totally, how the concept was defined....

RHG: Excuse me. Ash's view is very strongly that until he became the director of OMB, that the management side of things was ignored totally.

HRH: Ignored totally? OK. I would guess that that's an overstated, but valid, statement. He would know; I would defer to his judgment on it. I would say that he would probably be a little more extreme than necessary in the statement of his evaluation, and probably in the actual evaluation. I would guess that Shultz brought more of the desired managerial approach into it than Ash is giving him credit for, but less than Ash expected to be brought in.

RHG: I'm very likely overstating his position, but that's how I understand it.

HRH: Well, it sounds Ash-like. It may be accurate. I would guess that it's not.... A more objective appraisal would be that he did some, but not as much as was hoped for, and that that was maybe partly because he didn't understand, or have the ability to push it as far as he wanted. Also, that it probably wasn't

possible to push it as far. Ash, with no political experience at all, would look at something from a business viewpoint, which is, you decide to make a change, you make the change on Tuesday, and it's implemented on Wednesday, and you go forth from there. In government, that doesn't happen. You don't move things that easily.

As we've already talked about, there was strong resistance to this change, anyway, internally. Certainly within the bureaucracy, and in Congress. I'm sure that.... George Shultz is not a radical mover forward, anyway. George Shultz is a low-key, "Let's get it going and gradually moving into it" [type person]. Which in many cases is a better way of achieving change, more effectively, than saying, "This is the way it's going to be," (bang), "do it." Shultz may well have greased the skids for change in ways that made it easier for Ash to bring about some of the changes he wanted to bring about when he got in there, than would have been the case had Ash been the first Director instead of Shultz, and had to deal with all the existing inertia and opposition.

RHG: All right, let's consider OMB and the Domestic Council in place, as being the first important reorganizational change in the Executive Office of the President.

HRH: OK.

RHG: I'm not going to talk about some of the essentially efficiency oriented changes, such as the creation of EPA [Environmental Protection Agency], and things like that. Just to go back to some things we were talking about in the last two days, and

consider for a moment the part that the Cabinet had in the executive branch. Nixon felt, initially, that he was selecting a very strong Cabinet and one that, I'm sure, he intended to work closely with. As we discussed, for a variety of reasons, members of the White House staff were increasingly put between the President and the Cabinet. To the outside world it may have looked like the President.... Some people may have said, "The President's being isolated by his staff," (we talked about all this), and others may have felt he was isolating himself with the staff. But there was good reason, because of the way the Cabinet worked.

The second major reorganization proposal made by the Ash Council regarding the Executive Office of the [President] was the Reorganization Plan Number Two of 1971, which was the plan to reorganize the Cabinet into four super agencies. I didn't bring the names of these with me, but the four oldest Departments were to stay as they were. That is, State, and Defense, and Justice, and the Treasury Departments. The other Departments were to be organized into several functionally designed agencies. I think they were Community Resources, Natural Resources--I'm forgetting, but the concept is clear.

Now, let's step away from that for just a moment. On page two of the journal notes I have here, February 11, 1970, there's an entry that the President is intrigued by an article which George Romney brought him about making the Government work. Now, this is over a year into the administration, and by this time I think it's fairly clear that Cabinet Government is not succeeding

in the Nixon administration. This article, that Romney gives to Nixon, makes the pitch for using the Cabinet Departments as the lead agencies on programs, instead of having the White House staff do it. Do you remember anything about this? Nixon's reading this article, or his interest in it?

HRH: I really don't. It's sort of, as I see this journal entry, it sort of strikes a distant chord, but I don't remember anything about it. I see the entry the day before was that Romney left an article on the failings of trying to run the executive branch out of the White House. The concern that we've got to solve some of these problems, or it's going to build up, especially in Ehrlichman's area, because he's moving forward and there's resentment of that. [Bryce] Harlow thinks that the press is already zeroing in on Ehrlichman because of that. There was concern on that. Obviously, the article interested the President, as he's telling me the next day, on the 11th. He read the article and was interested in it.

The thing of using Cabinet Departments as lead agencies, instead of White House staff direction, applied the right way, was exactly what we were talking about, too. Except that you still had to have some means of coordinating that, and of assuring that it was following the track that the President wanted it to follow. That it wasn't a horse running off on its own steam, and in its own direction.

I don't know what the article was. I can't help you on that. I don't know that this was necessary.... I don't think that this article was, <u>per se</u>, the initiating force on this. It

undoubtedly was a factor. It was something that came up, and was talked about at the moment.

RHG: Do you know, was this something that Nixon, yourself, and others in the White House staff worried about, that is, the fact that the White House staff had a lot of responsibility and the Cabinet clearly had, in some respects, been put at a remove from the President? Is this something that you just kind of chronically were worried about?

HRH: Not in that sense at all. It was the opposite sense, really. The problem was there, but it wasn't that we were worried that we had a lot and the Cabinet didn't have any. It was that the Cabinet wasn't doing what it was supposed to be doing. We weren't getting the initiative from the place where the resources were, and where the talent theoretically was, which was the Cabinet Departments. We had a very small staff. Very limited resources compared to any Cabinet Department, let alone all of them together.

The hope was that you could get sufficient control of, and provide sufficient direction to, the Cabinet Departments that they would develop these programs and take these initiatives, and come up with the ideas, and carry out the implementation of their segments of the President's overall program. That they would try to understand what it is that the President's trying to accomplish; what his principles were; what his objectives were. Then, to evolve programs and policies that reflected those, and then carry them out. Get them done. Which they had the means and the funds to do, and the people and the talent. That wasn't

happening. It wasn't terribly surprising that it wasn't happening. Nixon, especially, recognized that "It ain't bloody likely it's gonna happen," because it just doesn't.

What he was trying to do from the outset was find ways to cause it to happen, that way, and all of the things that we did in re-structuring, moving around, within the White House staff, and externally, changing of both structure and process and people--all three--was aimed at that end. The ultimate re-organization plan--the one that we put forth later, and that got shot down by Congress, and that we then revised some more and intended to implement in the second term, and announced that as an Executive Order process, rather than a legislative process.... We modified it in order to not require any legislation, but to evolve a plan that would leave everything legislatively mandated in position, but would restructure it in its lines of reporting. Change the structure and process of the existing apparatus, without legislation, but by Executive Order, by Presidential action, so as to accomplish what we were trying to accomplish, which was a number of things.

The ultimate objective, to get a coordinated executive branch, moving forward together, in devising and implementing policies that were in furtherance of the President's overall program. In order to do that, we were trying to narrow the span of control. One of the incredible management problems in the executive branch is that too many people report, by law, or order, or whatever, to the President of the United States, directly. The heads of all the Cabinet Departments, the heads of

many of the executive branch agencies, and, in a sense, the heads of even the independent agencies. The Federal Reserve, and places like that, who, in some ways, report to the President, although they're theoretically independent. There are too many people, just in numbers of individuals, reporting to the President. Because it's all those people, plus the President's own staff that are working directly with him.

The ultimate concept was to try to narrow that span of control to a workable span of control. To structure within the workable span of control a rationally allied grouping of agencies and Departments, based on mission and capability. Then move ahead, with both program development and implementation, in ways that would further the President's program. Get control of the bureaucracy, to the degree that that was possible. At least to get some responsiveness as to carrying out the things the President wanted carried out.

RHG: You're referring to the so-called "Super Cabinet" proposal, which Nixon did not like, as you point out in your notes.

HRH: He didn't like it, but he bought it.

RHG: I mean the--he didn't like the proposal itself, you mean? Or the name?

HRH: Oh, Super Cabinet name. He had some objections to the proposal, too. He had concerns about the proposal.

RHG: What were they?

HRH: I don't remember. The final proposal, obviously, he liked enough to approve and to buy. It was the process, as we were trying to get to that, we had to make some changes to deal with concerns

that he had. Super Cabinet was not the right name. It was the inevitable name that you come up with, because you have to.... We were creating four Cabinet officers into a separate category, and there needed to be some identification of them. Super Cabinet was the inevitable, I think, but wrong, handle. Just like "CREEP" [Committee to Re-elect the President] was the inevitable but wrong name for the election Committee.

RHG: It was catchy, but it didn't make those who weren't in it feel very proud.

HRH: Well, it didn't make anybody feel very proud. I don't think the people who were in it wanted to be called Super Cabinet officers either. It wasn't a good term.

RHG: Do you know the origins of that proposal, because it's quite different from the reorganization plan that failed?

HRH: What it did was, it started from the reorganization plan that failed, or from the objectives of that plan, and recognized that the plan had failed, because Congress wouldn't pass it. That Congress wouldn't pass any plan that was sweeping enough to accomplish what we were after. Therefore, we had to devise a plan--or there had to be devised a plan--that could be carried out by Executive Order, and still not fly directly in the face of legislative mandate.

The evolution of that plan was really worked by Ehrlichman and a task force that Ehrlichman put together, with strong participation, on an in-and-out basis, by me, and some of my staff people. We used our key staffs, and a lot of that, as I recall, was done in the post-election.... Some of it must have

been done prior to the election, because we had a lot of that in place, really, as of the time of the election. A lot of the work was done up at Camp David, and I have the feeling that it was done during our month at Camp David in November of '72, right after the election. When Ehrlichman and I, our key staffs, and the President camped out at Camp David, almost solidly, for a month. Really took the Government apart, and put it back together, or took the executive branch apart and put it back together, was what the plan was.

The plan itself was really the President participated on an in-and-out basis. I participated more often, on an in-and-out basis, and it was Ehrlichman and a task force unit that he put together...

RHG: Of his staff?

HRH: ...um hmm, that developed it. Now, of his staff--it was an ad hoc staff. I think he pulled some people.... Ed Harper was of his staff. I think Ed Harper was involved in it, and later ended up over at OMB. I think we had somebody from OMB involved in it, too. I really can't remember. I don't know whether anything in my notes here gives any clues...

RHG: I don't think so, specifically.

HRH: ...as to who put it all together. Basically, that's what it was. It was an inside White House staff program that was put together.

RHG: Here's a....

HRH: [Examines document] Now see, November 1st of '72, which would be just before the election, I had a meeting with Ash, and my notes indicate that it was regarding a reorganization combining the

Departments. Now, that would be our reorganization--that's the Super Cabinet plan. I say there that "After going around, we came out pretty much full cycle, back to where we pretty much are now. And where I was four years ago, which is that there should be a senior assistant for domestic, one for foreign, one for economic. We should work the other plans into that kind of framework. Ash is going to give the White House a week of his work after the election, trying to get a reorganization plan finished." I don't remember--I don't know that he did. Maybe he did work with us, for awhile, after the election.

RHG: He came on the White House staff in December 1972, so it was the next month. I don't really know the day.

HRH: He did come on staff?

RHG: Yeah.

HRH: Full-time?

RHG: I believe so. In December, and then beginning in early February, he became also the OMB Director, and he also stayed as an Assistant to the President. I guess the Super Cabinet people were called Counsellors. I'm not quite clear on that.

HRH: I think you're probably right.

RHG: He was one of the Super Cabinets. Weinberger...

HRH: But then, following my notes through....

RHG: ...no, no he wasn't. I take that back. He was an Assistant, and the three Super Cabinet people were Weinberger, [James] Lynn, and [Earl] Butz.

HRH: Was that it?

RHG: Um hmm. Ash was there, as well, but not representing the

Cabinet, of course, because he was Director of OMB. He, by the way, and maybe I'm overstating his views again, but as I understand his view, was that the Super Cabinet never had a chance. That it shared the fault of the Cabinet positions in that the Super Cabinet people, the idea, although it reduced the number of people that were reporting to the President, did not change the fact that those people were basically representing constituencies, and speaking for those constituencies to the President.

HRH: Yeah. He may be right on that. As I've gotten into this whole management methodology thing in the last year, I see that it was not right for another reason. Which is that there are styles of management, and there are Departmental functions of management, such as marketing, and sales, and production, and engineering, and finance, and accounting, and R & D [research and development], and that sort of thing, that when you're putting a management structure together, you have to be sure to put the entrepreneurial type people together. Not put a production oriented, production style Department and people together with an entrepreneurial type, because the production types crush the entrepreneurial.

Therefore, marketing and sales should never be combined, because marketing is entrepreneurial and sales is production. Research--R & D--or engineering, and production, should never be combined, because is production is production, and engineering is entrepreneurial. Or R & D is entrepreneurial. Finance and accounting should never be combined, because finance is

entrepreneurial, and accounting is production. Instead, if you're going to combine any of those Departments, you should combine sales, and production, and accounting together, and combine finance, and marketing, and R & D together, because those are entrepreneurial types that will thrive with each other, inter-communicating.

By that theory, looking at our thing, we lumped Departments together on the basis of their task, rather than on the basis of their style. We put the wrong ones together. It's interesting. I'm working now--will be working next week--with the theorist in this field on an article that analyzes the assurance of failure that [Mikhail] Gorbachev is going to have on his combined policy of glasnost and perestroika for some of those same reasons, and for the fact that he's allowing glasnost, which is the freedom, before he's accomplished perestroika, which is structure. He's got to have the structure in place first to deal with the freedom, or he's not going to be able to handle the freedom. That's exactly what's happening. It's in the LA [Los Angeles] Times today. The Soviet press is now attacking perestroika, because they have the freedom to do it. What you've got to do is first get the interests combined so that you have support within the structure, and a structure to carry it out, and to control it, before you let the glasnost, the freedom part, take place. We're working with the paper on that theory.

In going back, we refer to the fact that the Nixon second term reorganization plan makes some of the same errors, not in the glasnost question, but in perestroika, in that the structure

is wrong. That we combined the wrong elements. We combined them by mission rather than by orientation or style. I think there's something to that. I think there's something to Ash's point, too, it was doomed to failure. That's an oversimplification, because anything you do along that line, in that context, is going to be doomed to failure. What you've got to do is.... It isn't doomed to total failure. It's just doomed to non-total success, and you've got to be satisfied with some degree of success in this kind of thing, rather than expect total success.

RHG: Now, the other factor in this reorganization, besides the management work that helped to bring about at least the Super Cabinet part of it, was the degree to which the President supported it. I don't remember where these notes are, but I can recall many entries where the President is speaking very strongly as someone who will have to run for re-election in 1972, and I suspect under the influence of [John] Connally, to a great degree, that reorganization is not a good issue. "Drop it. Forget it. Don't talk about it. It just won't sell. Nobody cares." Did he...? Now, the managers are going forward with these reorganization proposals. Did Nixon in fact just withdraw from this entirely, and let the thing attenuate?

HRH: Not entirely. He recognized there was no political benefit to it. It was something that he had to take things in proper order. First he had to be re-elected. Then he had to reorganize. It wasn't that he would be re-elected because of reorganizing.

RHG: So he still believed in the concept, but he...

HRH: Oh, yeah.

RHG: ...just wanted to kind of put it aside for a moment?

HRH: Absolutely. He believed in the concept structurally. He didn't believe in it politically. He didn't see any political merit in it. He saw political disadvantages, because it essentially creates enemies.

RHG: OK.

[End cassette one, side two]

[Begin cassette two, side one]

RHG: Just a few last words on the structure of reorganization. One is that I found an entry in the journal here, January 9, 1973, that was on a topic we were talking about. See if you have any other comment on it. Nixon speaking to Ash, who's just recently arrived on the White House staff, that OMB under Shultz and Weinberger was just a glorified Budget Bureau, with a little management. Ash should get a good budget man to rely on, so he can concentrate on management. Any thoughts about that?

HRH: That's obviously pretty self-explanatory. Nixon's view coincides with what you said was Ash's view, expressed earlier, that Shultz and Weinberger had kept it as a Budget Bureau. Probably a valid view. I think they probably made some progress. I think they probably ran into some very tough buzzsaws. The next point, that Ash should get a good budget man, I assume is premised on the thought that Ash is going to be made Director of the [Office], or has been, at that point.

RHG: I think the nomination had gone forward.

HRH: So that the intent was at least there, and so the President is really counselling Ash on how to conduct his new position as head

of the Office. Making it clear that he's looking to him to exercise his management thing that the whole change was designed to accomplish. I think that makes sense. It affirms what you said Ash said, and it's.... I would be surprised, still, if it were, in fact, that Shultz and Weinberger hadn't done much. Although, Shultz being as easygoing as he is, may not have been as aggressive as clearly needed to be done because of the highly entrenched resistance to change that, I know, they found in the office.

You had a totally different kind of team. In the next round you had Ash, but not only Ash, but Fred [Frederic] Malek moved over there, who is total hardnosed management, and totally--both of them--unpolitical. Shultz is not political in governmental or partisan politics, but he's political in an academic--he's gone through the academic political machine. Weinberger is a political guy and a lawyer, not management oriented, and was not really in there as manage--. Shultz was to provide the management side, and Weinberger the financial side, I think, in that team. It may just be that Shultz didn't really hit that that way.

RHG: But on the other hand, Shultz and Ehrlichman apparently had a very good rapport.

HRH: Oh, absolutely, and so did Shultz and I. George was a very--he was a good man to work with and worked well. But he may not have been strong enough to overcome the inertia.

RHG: Did you have any sense in your last months in the White House as to what kind of [an] OMB Director and Assistant to the President

Roy Ash was, and was going to be?

HRH: Not really. From the time he took the post 'til the time I left, I was pretty much absorbed in the problems that led to my leaving, and I don't think I had a lot of very clear thinking about that sort of thing, at that time, really, at all. I did some, and obviously I was still very much involved in a lot of the ongoing operation of the Government and the office--the White House--but, I was certainly also strongly diverted.

RHG: Yes.

HRH: Ash is not a charismatic manager. He's not an inspirer. He's a dogmatic, by-the-book manager. That may be exactly what was needed there. I would certainly think that the combination of Ash and Malek would accomplish the changes. The problem they had to have run into, though, is the problem that the entire White House certainly--the executive branch, really--ran into. Which was that certainly from March on, in '73, not only was I strongly diverted, and Ehrlichman, but the President was. From then on, he was on a downhill run, that was not always totally recognized as such, but was frequently. I think that the weakening of the President by his having to go through all that, and then into the impeachment thing, and then the resignation, that it made it highly unlikely, if not impossible, for any real accomplishments, in <u>any</u> area of the executive branch that required Presidential shove.

Of course, the reorganization thing--the Super Cabinet thing--fell by the wayside. A lot of what Ash was trying to do over at Budget may have--he may have had to totally consume his

energies just to hold the line, rather than to try to make any progress.

RHG: All right. Let's talk a bit about infrastructure in place then. Let's talk a little bit about some of the important changes that occurred in staff people between late 1969 and the end of the second term, and then at more length about the second transition --an important transition from the first to the second terms. Just a few. Could you talk a little bit about [Robert] Finch's leaving HEW [Department of Health, Education, and Welfare] and coming to the White House as a Counsellor.

HRH: That essentially was a personal thing. Bob had burned himself out, really, at HEW. A great deal of it caused by the frustration of not being able to do what he wanted to do, and that caused, in my opinion, by the fact that Bob is, like Nixon, and a lot of other people, not a manager. The job at HEW was not a policy job. It was a management job. It was, at that time, one of the most difficult management challenges in the world. Bob was the wrong guy to be put into it. He was put there because that's where he wanted to be, but he didn't want to be there because he perceived it as a management job. He wanted to be there because he perceived it as an agency whose mission coincided with a lot of the things Bob wanted.

He has an overwhelming interest in health, as you'll find out when you talk with him, and in education. He had served with me on the Board of Regents, because he was Lieutenant Governor, and ex officio, therefore, on the Board of Regents, when I was on the Board. Had been on the Board of Occidental College in Los

Anageles for a long time before that. Deep interest in education. And in the whole welfare thing, in the real challenge of what to do with welfare. So, it seemed like an ideal spot for him. In a substantive, creative sense, it was, but if anyone had analyzed the accurate job description--the need--for the Secretary of HEW--it would not have fit Bob Finch, in any way. Therefore, he was miscast, by us, but at his request--by the President--but at his request.

That miscasting was the cause of a very difficult time for him as Secretary. All kinds of problems arising due to the uprisings in the country, and the Indian uprisings, and the welfare problems, and the welfare reform effort, and the collapse of college administrations, and all this sort of stuff. It made it.... It would have been impossible for anybody, probably, but it was more impossible for Bob, because he's very idealistic, very mission-oriented, not structure and process oriented. He couldn't get to where he wanted to go.

He was ill. He had been in the hospital, I believe, shortly before he left the Department.

RHG: You're right, yes.

HRH: It just became absolutely clear, we were burning the guy out, and for his own sake, and the Department's, both, the change should be made. The President didn't want to lose his participation and counsel, so he brought him over to the White House as Counsellor to the President, which was a post that could be whatever you wanted it to be. It was a good post. That's the kind of job Bob should have had, if he weren't going to be a Senator, which is

what he really should have had. Then, a Counsellor to the President was the right kind of thing. Where he could sit and give advice and talk with people, develop policy, conduct discussion forums, and that kind of stuff, he's marvelous.

RHG: The impression I got from many entries in your journal was that Finch, as Secretary of HEW, was not controlling his agency in the direction in which the administration wanted it to head. Could you,...

HRH: That's right.

RHG: ...in the White House, could you understand? I mean, there was Leon Panetta, who was in the Civil Rights Division, making statements. Several people in several different parts of HEW making statements contrary to what Nixon regarded as his administration's policy.

HRH: That's right.

RHG: Could you all understand how Finch could let that happen, or why he was letting it happen?

HRH: Knowing Finch, you could, yeah. Because, first of all, in his heart, Bob probably believed with his people, at least to some degree. In other words, he wasn't probably as strongly on the President's position as the President and some of the people in the White House were. And more sympathetic, at least, to the views of some of his people. Secondly, Bob is, again, a political guy, and a make things work out type guy, not a confronter. So, he's not the type to haul someone in, and chew him out, and say, "Shape up or ship out." Which is probably what was required in some of those cases. Or even not have to bother

talking, just ship 'em out. That isn't Bob's way of doing things. He had some very strong people, with very strong convictions, in there, who were taking advantage of him. Of his good nature, and his openness, and all that sort of thing.

It wasn't surprising. It was frustrating. And it frustrated the President. There were some incidents, with Panetta, specifically, and I think some other people, on some of that. In the whole school busing issue, there was an enormous conflict between Mitchell and Finch, from the Justice versus HEW side. There were a lot of areas of that kind, and there problems of that kind. They arose.... I'll still go back to the fact that Bob was miscast.

RHG: All right. He was brought into the White House in June, 1970, and made a Counsellor. The impression that I got from your journal was that he never found a role as a White House Counsellor. Nixon, time and again, is saying, "We have to find something for Bob." I think at one point he was sent on a South American trip. Essentially, it was just to tour the country, more than anything else. What was the problem there?

HRH: The problem was just what it was stated. We just never found something suitable for him to do. The issues were such, and the things that were taking the President's attention, that the President wasn't using Bob as a direct Counsellor very much. I think that was the main problem, probably.

RHG: One thing that comes up, time and again, is Nixon saying, "Get Finch out of California." That was California politics. Do you know why? Do you remember why?

HRH: Hmm. I'm not sure why. I'd have to get a context, or something. I don't remember it.

RHG: Well, we'll let that go. When Finch came to the White House, there [were] some others.... I'm not quite sure of the timing of this. Essentially, a new White House staff group [was] formed, which you called "FRESH", which was Finch, [Donald] Rumsfeld, Ehrlichman, Shultz, and yourself. How did this group work together, and how long did it work together? I think, if I remember right, the President was very eager about working with this new group of people.

HRH: FRESH was an apt acronym. It not only was the first letters of everybody's last names, so it worked that way, it also was sort of the concept of bringing some fresh thinking in. I think [the President] was looking to it, for one thing, for a lot of these, what we were talking about yesterday. The ideas and approaches that would affect public opinion favorably in various ways. Things that we could be doing, or ways that we could be doing them.

I don't exactly remember what the FRESH group was supposed to do. It did meet--I'm not sure. It seems to me that the FRESH group met--I know we met, from time to time. I think fairly regularly for awhile, but probably not for very long. It seems to me it was sort of to deal with ad hoc situations as they came along. There would be something before us, and the FRESH group would sit down and ponder it, and decide.... Think through ways of approaching it, or how to deal with it, or something like that. I can't remember whether it got into trying to evolve

long-range things. I think it was more evaluative and ad hoc in nature, and was really just a collection of people in whom the President had great confidence to deal with problems or opportunities as they came along.

That's not a very good answer. That's about as [well] as I can do, I think.

RHG: There's an entry August 9, 1970, a bit further down this page, about Ehrlichman's feeling that the President has lost confidence in him. That Ehrlichman hadn't seen the President for a month.

HRH: Alone.

RHG: Was he in fact frozen out, or was that just a misunderstanding?

HRH: I think it was a combination. I think there was some degree of freezing out. There were times the President would go up and down, and people on the staff would go up and down. I went through exactly these same kinds of things. You should be able to find them in the notes. Frequently with Kissinger. Fairly frequently with Harlow in the time that Harlow was on the staff. Occasionally with Moynihan. Actually, probably with everybody, in one form or another, as we went along.

First of all, these people tend to get absorbed in their areas of responsibility, and that is not necesarily the area in which the President is absorbed at any given time. I'm not saying it happened this way, but this could have been a period where the President was absorbed with foreign policy matters, or something with Kissinger, and just didn't have, or want to take, the time to get into Ehrlichman's areas of interest, concerns, whatever. It could have been where.... I notice this talk was

regarding desegregation. It could have been that Ehrlichman was pushing a view, or an action, on desegregation, that the President didn't want to follow, and didn't want to hear more argument about. Therefore, was just keeping John out of the play for that reason.

He does say here he hasn't seen the President alone for a month. He doesn't say he hasn't seen the President. I'm sure he was in lots of meetings with the President. What he's saying there is, he didn't have a chance to, face-to-face, go through his problem with him, or to confront him with whatever it was he wanted. As I recall, this was a period where there was some validity. Where Ehrlichman was being somewhat frozen out, and I can't rememember why. Whether it was because he didn't want Ehrlichman in, or whether it was because he just was absorbed in something else. It was one or the other, in some way.

This kind of problem I tried to solve myself. It was one that.... In the first place, I knew time solved most of these. It was a matter of riding them through. In the second place, I didn't want to bother the President with them, because we ought to be able to take care of this kind of stuff on our own. Sometimes, specifically, the President had ordered me not to bother him with them. He knew there was a problem with somebody, but he said, "You take care of it."

My solution this time, however, was to confront the President. In other words, I assumed the reason for that--and I think I'm probably right--was that I felt John had some merit to what he was saying. Quite possibly it was something that I had

raised with the President, and hadn't been able to successfully get the President to focus on. Consequently, I felt the President deserved a confrontation, and we needed to work it out. In any event, I suggested that we confront the President with it.

The upshot was a three hour talk with the President at Camp David, during which John laid out his whole problem. Explained to the President. John's good at that. He doesn't pull punches, so I'm sure he did lay it out very clearly, and the President, step by step, shot down John's problem. He said, "You're wrong about this," and "This is the reason for that." Step by step, dealt with the issues that John raised. Answered John's concerns pretty much. I notice that the basic subject area was apparently desegregation. In the process the President covered with John his concerns about liberal appointments to the [desegregation] commissions, and overreaction in the South, and all that. The President took the time, went through it. He had enormous respect for John, and that's why I would bring a confrontation like this about.

John's confrontations were not petty, normally. Henry's were, often. Harlow's were superficial. Those were things I felt we ought to be able to deal with. John's, in this one, was substantive, first of all. Probably with enough validity--and obviously was, because it took a three hour talk going through it all. It was productive for the President to do that. John was a useful implement in the President's apparatus there. It was not [conducive] to good business to let something like that fester. Normally, though, that kind of problem, as I said, did resolve

itself in time. It was better just to let it lie, and let it work itself out.

RHG: There's a, to me, quite remarkable entry on September 12, 1970, at the bottom of this page. Now, remarkable because this is not yet two years into the administration, and it reads like this [in part]: "The President agrees with my [Haldeman's] idea that we should shoot generally for replacing all key people by mid-'73. And then really charge ahead to accomplish something during the first half of the second term.... Fun to contemplate. In the meantime, should gear everything to '72 re-election, and winning Congress." The thing that seems really even sad about this is that Nixon is not yet two years into his Presidency. He apparently is so disenchanted with his administration that he wants to replace every key person. Could you comment on that?

HRH: Oh, no, I think that's misreading this, totally. In the first place, it was my idea that he agreed with. It wasn't the President expressing disenchantment with people. The concept there was that people get stale in positions. It wasn't necessarily firing everybody. It was replacing in the sense of what we actually set out to do, and that.... It's interesting that we were in this much specific detail about a procedure that we implemented, in November of '72. When we asked everybody in the office to submit his resignation.

This was a Harlow theory, that Bryce expounded very strongly, that he had developed over his years in Government. Which was that all people in key positions should be moved at least once every three years. That's career people as well as

appointed people. His idea there was that that would have the effect, first of all, of freshening. In other words, you move people out of things that they've become stale and bogged down in. Inevitably in Government, you do get bogged down, in whatever you're trying to do. Nothing ever seems to get worked out as fast and in the way that you want it to.

Also, it would have what Bryce saw as a very beneficial.... And I think this was a very insightful thing.... Did I talk about this in the earlier [interview]?

RHG: I don't think so.

HRH: Saw as the benefit of breaking up the interrelationships between bureaucratic staffs, Department and agency staffs, and [Capitol] Hill staffs. Bryce felt that there was a very bad, long term, very solid "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours", "you help me and I'll help you," quid pro quo kind of relationship between an agency staff and a Hill staff concerned with the same area that the agency was concerned in. That enabled them, because of this quid pro quo relationship, and, because of their long term knowledge of the game, to very effectively get control over the areas of their operation, to the extent of eliminating the Congressman's control at the legislative end, and the Presidential appointee's control at the White House end, at the executive end. Bryce saw the every three-year, shift everybody around to a new job.... Move everybody on the staff to someplace else, so that their interface on the Hill would be someone different than they have now. So they'd have to start all over again, build a new relationship. He saw that as a very healthy

thing.

I can see a lot of merit to that. It appealed to me at the time, and still does, in thinking about it. It isn't practical, obviously, and you couldn't do it in totality, but you could have that kind of thought in mind, and make changes on a periodic or continuing basis that would be designed, among other things, to break up those relationships. Especially if you could detect where they were particularly tight and constricting.

I don't think at all that this reflects any feeling on the President that nobody was any good; we've got to get a whole new batch. It certainly didn't on my part. I had no thought there that everybody should leave the Government. It was that they all ought to be replaced; re-positioned, I guess would be a better way of saying that. So that they had a fresh look at things. You promote some people. As we got into--I can't claim having thought this in 1970, but I know I was thinking it in 1972, at the time we actually did this. I knew that there were a lot of people who wanted to leave the Government, but who felt they had to stay through the first term, through the election, out of loyalty to the President. That it would look bad if they packed up and left before the election. But that they wanted to get back to business, or school, or whatever it was they were doing. At all levels: not just the top people, but some of our young guys. A young guy that had been in there for four years, at age 20, had used up four years--if he didn't want to spend his life in Government--he would have the feeling he better get back to business some time pretty soon, or it's all going to pass him by.

Some of the guys wanted to do that.

I wanted to make it easy for those people that wanted to leave, to leave. Also, to make it easy for those people whom we wanted to leave--to be fired--out of the Government. There were a number of categories of people. There were the people who wanted to leave Government that we didn't want to lose. That we would want to try to keep in. By moving them to a better job we might be able to keep them in. Number two, there were people who wanted to leave Government that we were just as happy to have leave. Or at least willing to have leave. They weren't so good that we would fight, bleed, and die to keep them there. So this made it easy for them to go. It also made it easy for the ones we wanted to move up to move out of where they were, and up.

Number three, were the people who wanted to stay, but wanted to try something else. A lot of people had talked to me about that: "I love being here, but I'd like to--I'm in Transportation now, but I'm bored with Transportation. I'd like to go over to HUD [Department of Housing and Urban Development] and see what I could do over there." So, the people that wanted to stay, but wanted a change. Then, the people who wanted to stay, but wanted to move up, make progress. Feel that they were moving onward in staying. That four years was a long time in one job.

Then, there were the people that wanted to stay that we didn't want to stay. That we wanted to get rid of. So, this made it easy on that. Because it made it appear that they were leaving of their own volition, and that they weren't standouts in leaving. Everyone resigned; they went ahead and did it. It

took some of the dark cloud off of the presumed disgrace of being fired. Also, it gave us the clean slate to try and write not only a new structure, and new process, but a new peopling of that structure and process into place.

That was the reason for the "Everybody resign," and we made it clear to people. It always has been portrayed as this brutal thing; this cold, heartless thing. We said immediately, "We don't expect you to be leaving Government; we want resignations in hand from everybody." The President said this to the Cabinet. They wanted it from all of their people. So that, there would be no stigma attached to moving people around; moving them up; down; out; and over. Also, an immediate part of that thing was, we wanted to know from the people, along with their resignation, we wanted the information from them: (A) "Would you like to stay in Government?"; (B) "If so, is there a particular place you want to be?"; and, (C) "Do you want to stay where you are?"

RHG: I think because of the darker side of Nixon, the way that he would respond to some people, some institutions, it's very tempting to read some of that vindictive quality into this change. And there was some. There was a group of "bad guys"--that's your term--that you wanted to get rid of. October 15, 1970: "Plans for after November. Getting rid of the bad guys and excess baggage." So, there was an element of that in there, but...

HRH: Absolutely.

RHG: ...there was also much else.

HRH: Um hmm. That, however, was getting rid of the "bad guys" in

November of '70, after the Congressional elections. That was not the looking forward to the second term.

RHG: Right. I understand.

HRH: That was laying the groundwork for the re-election period.

RHG: Here's an interesting entry somewhat before the big transition, in the end of '72. This is April 6, 1971. It's on the first page of the second group. "Nixon: It's time to ruthlessly weed out all those who will not stand strongly behind us." He specifically mentions Finch, [Donald] Rumsfeld, and [Clark] MacGregor. Then he makes a very poignant remark, I think: "None of the staff are here because of what they did. They're here because of what I did. I shall not go forward with anyone who has shown weakness. I want them all weeded out within thirty days." Any comments about that one?

HRH: That's one of the ones like "Give a lie detector test to everybody in the State Department worldwide." It's venting spleen. That isn't to say that it's totally meaningless. It's to say that it isn't meant literally, but it is expressing frustration with what he perceived at that point. I don't know what the specifics were. The failure of Finch, Rumsfeld, and MacGregor, as named, to stand strongly behind some administration position on something. Each of those guys was a Congressional, political type person. Rumsfeld and MacGregor had both been in Congress. They were pacifiers and mediators, rather than chargers. Obviously, they hadn't.... It was probably some specific. I don't know what it was, but I suspect that there was something that triggered this. That it isn't just a general

observation. On some issue--school desegregation, or clamping down on the campuses, or the Cambodia invasion--there was something, where these guys hadn't performed in as noble a fashion as the President would have liked. So, he's saying, if they won't stand behind us, then they can get out. They're not here because of.... Well, as he said, "None of the staff are here because of what they did. They're here because of what I did. I'm not going to go forward with anyone who's shown weakness." It's a general statement. "I want them all weeded out within thirty days." That was not, and I did not take it as, and did not execute it as, an order to me to fire these three people and everbody else who hadn't stood up with him, within thirty days. I did read it as an expression of current dissatisfaction with those people's performance, in some way.

RHG: Would you describe the idea of disloyalty as a leading motive behind the second transition period turnover, or just one of many?

HRH: Just one of many. It was not--it may have in one, or two, or maybe more, individual instances, been the leading, or the sole, motive. If it were true, and blatant disloyalty, or if it were someone who he felt clearly could be counted on to do the wrong thing, always. Then it could have been the major factor. In a general sense, though, I would say it was a factor. That was one question, that was weighed into the mix. Someone who was clearly disloyal, would be a prime candidate for removal. Someone who was questionably loyal in certain areas, it would depend on how his positives balanced that negative, as to whether you do

something.

RHG: [William] Rogers and Volpe might be in that category.

HRH: No, because I don't think in either case, I don't think there was a loyalty question. There it was a performance question. Volpe, really, it was more a personal one. He was annoying. With Rogers, it was.... Rogers's performance, in a lot of cases.... Well, there were a lot of factors in the Rogers thing. Rogers did not strongly take command of the State Department, and form it into the mold that Nixon wanted it. The intention, under the reorganization--I did cover this in the earlier thing, didn't I? What we were going to do at State?

RHG: I don't recall.

HRH: Because the intention there, Bill Rogers.... Nixon was disappointed in Rogers, in some ways, because he didn't stand up and strongly re-mold the State Department. He didn't carry out any kind of weeding out of the.... And there loyalty was a question in the career levels. He didn't weed out, or move into Siberia, the people that Nixon felt were clearly disloyal and disruptive. We got into a lot of stuff in the Rogers-Kissinger battles that were really very petty on both guys' parts, I've got to say. They were ego and status kinds of things, which I had no patience with. To me that was little kid stuff, and these guys should have been big men. And it happened both ways. Petty stuff. Who gets to go off the plane first. Who gets to sit at the number one seat at the table, and stuff. The plan, and Nixon was very.... One of the failures of the first term, and Vietnam was a major factor, was the failure to reorganize the State

Department, which he had very much vowed he was going to do. It was one of the, therefore, major missions for the second term, and the steps to be taken, and the process that was going to be taken, there was never any thought of Kissinger being made Secretary of State. Which ultimately he was. But that was not the plan, at all.

RHG: Supposed to be....

HRH: Nixon totally rejected the thought, all the time I was there, of Kissinger as a possibility, even, for Secretary of State. The thought was that Ken [Kenneth] Rush would be made Secretary of State. Rush having been Ambassador to Germany, and having been a law professor at Duke [University] Law School when Nixon was a student there. He was Nixon's law professor, and Nixon had an enormously high regard for Rush. He was to be made Secretary of State, as the figurehead, and the negotiator, and the ceremonial diplomat, and all that sort of thing. As one of the major roles of the Secretary of State. But not looked at as the guy to do anything with the Department. Under Secretary for Administration was to be Bill [William] Casey. Bill Casey's task, which he accepted with relish, was to tear apart the State Department from stem to stern and put it back together the way the President wanted it. And Bill Casey would have done it. Unfortunately, that, among other things, was one of the casualties of the thing.

I had to go to Rogers and ask him to resign as Secretary of State. That was a very ticklish and difficult thing. The President wanted it right away, and Rogers negotiated a delay on it, so it wouldn't appear he was being dumped in the

reorganization. Kissinger was furious at that, because the President had committed to Kissinger that Rogers would be gone at the start of the second term.

RHG: A couple of individual questions. Nixon felt that Pat [Patrick] Buchanan should leave the White House staff, beginning...

HRH: Where's that? I need to get that in context.

RHG: March 5, 1972. Buchanan now, I don't know exactly the relationship between the first incident, and Nixon's desire to get him off the staff, which I think was somewhat broader, but Buchanan was apparently very much opposed to the opening to [the People's Republic of] China, or at least to some things in the Shanghai Communique.

HRH: He was opposed to what he believed was the sellout of Formosa.

RHG: Then, on March 5, 1972, there's an entry: "Nixon does not think Buchanan should be on the White House staff anymore. That he will poison the well. He should go to CRP." About the same time--it's a little later, actually, and I don't know any context for this--Nixon decided that Colson would have to leave the White House. That he just couldn't keep.... He wanted Colson to set up a private law firm, outside the White House, and conduct a lot of the political business that he was....

HRH: Two totally different things. We shouldn't put them in the same bag.

RHG: OK.

HRH: Let me deal with the Buchanan one, because they are totally different in every respect. They're similar in the sense that both of them were externally controversial guys. They both had

very strong views, and expressed them in very pungent ways, and consequently were controversial. So there's that similarity. But the cases are totally different. The Buchanan thing, in this March thing, is totally within the context of his lack of support for the Shanghai Communique. The threat, either implicit or explicit, and I'm not sure--I don't remember which it was--that he was going to publicly disassociate himself from the President on that.

The President regarded that as an unforgivable, arrogant example of disloyalty in the White House staff. Buchanan was not a person who was entitled to, publicly, or even consider publicly, expressing any disagreement with the President. That he was a creature of the President, and that was his role, and that if he had that strong a.... In the first place, he had nothing to do with the Shanghai Communique. He had no responsibility for it. Therefore, no reason to have to disassociate himself, unless he [Buchanan] felt it was so important, that he felt he could no longer be associated with an administration that would take that position. And he had to resign on moral grounds, or something. On that basis, he should get out. I think that's where the President's saying, "If Buchanan's got any...." He also knew that Buchanan was a highly articulate and voluble spokesman. When Buchanan had a view, it was no secret. So he knew that he would be around the White House, "poisoning the well", as the President put it. And he didn't like that.

So, his view was, that he should move out of the White

House staff, over to the Re-election Committee. Now, there are some other pluses to that. Buchanan is a marvelous political speechwriter, and a guy who could provide rhetoric for the campaign. For himself and for others, for campaign communications, and all that sort of thing. It could very well be, that his value would be much greater over there, during the re-election period. We're only nine months from the election. We are setting up the re-election staff; the Committee to Re-elect is already in place. So, it might be a positive move, as well as a negative move. The upshot of that was that the next day, Buchanan told me he had decided to stay on the White House staff. That he would do the cause more good by staying on the inside than going out to the Re-election Committee. In other words, he didn't want to be sent out to what he viewed as Siberia. The President's reaction to that was not one of particular pleasure, because at that point he was still rankled by Buchanan's uprising. That all simmered down, I'm sure.

[Interruption]

The Colson one, I don't remember what.... Is there a thing on this? Oh yeah, here it is. November 10--that was right after the election. There was, at that time, starting to be some concern, and I still, to this day, don't know how deep it is, and it gets into all these guessings about Watergate. There was concern as to what Colson's role in Watergate and the other, what were starting to become--developed as--White House horrors, and that kind of thing.... I don't think that happened until a little bit later. There was an evolving thing that I sensed as

the President's not knowing what Colson's involvement might be. I certainly didn't know. Both the President and I had enormous respect for Colson's ability to get involved in things that you might not want him involved in. I had had to call Colson up short several times on specific things that he had been involved in. Where he moved beyond the bounds of where I felt, and/or where the President felt that he ought to be. I think there was.... After the election, there was--I remember--that there was a growing thing that we've got to get Colson out of here, because if he is tied to this, in any way, we must not have him in the White House when it becomes known that he's tied to it.

The same applied to Dwight Chapin, incidentally. He had had no tie, no contact with Watergate, at all. He did have an indirect tie to [Donald] Segretti and the "Dirty Tricks" campaign thing, but that was totally unrelated to Watergate. It was felt that Chapin should get out, because if he were out, as a private person somewhere else, and then were attacked with this, he would not be a focus of harm to himself, as well as to the White Hosue. Dwight did leave, on that basis. It was a tough thing for Dwight to do.

I don't know what Colson did. I guess he left, too, didn't he?

[End cassette two, side one]

[Begin cassette two, side two]

RHG: Colson, as I remember, resisted being removed from the White House. [I] just remember from your journal here. Stayed on until March [1973], but his staff was taken away, and he was

moved over into the West Wing, I think, and he did not want to leave, is the impression I got.

HRH: Well, following my notes here, I see this first note was on athe 10th of November, which was right after the election. "The President's talking about moving Colson to Congressional Relations staff, or outside to set up a law firm and work on New Majority projects," which is what the President was leaning toward. Then, three days later, on the 13th, "Nixon wants to expand Colson's reach. Doesn't want him in the White House, the Labor Department, or the [Republican] National Committee. He says, 'Let's make Colson our Clark Clifford.' He'd set up a law firm outside, and be the man to see for labor, and the Secretary of Labor would be Colson's man, Colson's contact. Anyone who wants to talk to the President about labor would go through Colson. His firm would be counsel to the National Committee. Get the Milk Producers. Break with the Business Council. Tie closely to Don [Donald] Kendall's group." (That was the businessmen's support group.) "Have media, antitrust, and tax departments in the law firm; work in the New American Majority project."

This was Nixon evolving a thought of a way, I honestly believe in this case, it was not a way to get rid of Colson, it was a way to use Colson more effectively. That it was a positive approach. Although, the earlier thing, I think, had a negative connotation to it, too. Then I see on the 15th, "Nixon wants Colson to leave now. He won't fit in the reorganized White House. Convince him to leave now." He told me to talk to him,

and convince him that the President needed him on the outside, and that he's determined to get politics out of the White House.

Then I see on the 16th, a day later, I'm to "persuade Colson to leave now and begin a new outside assignment." This is obviously a continuing issue. Then I see on the 17th, "Colson doesn't want to leave now." Obviously I've talked to him, and he doesn't want to leave, but Nixon wants him out now. "Colson wants to stay another six months. Nixon wants to set him up on the outside. [I'm] to talk to him and be very tough." Then the next day, Nixon says, "We're going to announce Colson's departure now, but say it will be effective March 1st, because the President wants him to aid in the reorganization, and then move him into the West Wing." In other words, let him sit in the West Wing for awhile--I think that was a pat to him--and then move him out. In other words, you move him up, and then move him out.

That was the evolution of that, but the motivation was dual in the Colson case. One, the concern about his ties to Watergate. Two, I think a very valid feeling that he could be more productive, more useful, on the outside, than he could be inside. I really think that was true. Even if he had no tie to Watergate.

On the Buchanan thing, it turns out there is another sort of a parallel similarity. The motivation was dual there, also, but the negative one there had nothing to do with Watergate. It was the Shanghai Communique attitude, which just rankled Nixon. But that's the kind of thing that goes away. The positive thing was, maybe he would be better over at the Re-election Committee,

working on the campaign, than at the White House: more effective. I would guess, had we done that, he would have moved over there on assignment, and moved back to the White House after the election. As it turned out we didn't do it at all.

RHG: Can you remember an instance or two of something Colson did that you had to call him up on? You mentioned that.

HRH: Boy, I can't. There are a couple, and I think I've written about them somewhere else. I may be able to dredge them up out of some of the other stuff I've got.

RHG: All right.

HRH: Nothing comes immediately to mind. I don't remember why, but I remember that Colson violated, and I caught him at it, my absolute law in the White House, which is that nobody in the White House is ever to say to anybody in the White House, or outside, "The President wants this done." Unless, in fact, and clearly and specifically, the President has said to you, "I want this done, and I want you to carry it out as my wish." Colson used the "The President wants this done" thing in the wrong way--violated that law--and I really chewed him out. We had several very tough, head-on sessions, because Colson was a tough guy. He was a zealot. He was a guy that you'd tell him, "Burn down the mission," and by golly, all he says is, "Where's the gasoline?" No thought of "Should we get the statues out first?", or anything else.

I had spent a lot of time with Colson, working on how to work with Nixon. Making the point to him of the necessity of disobeying some Nixon orders. I urged him, because he didn't

know Nixon all that well and all, and because he had this tendency to overreaction anyway, to talk with me before he carried out any questionable order, so that we would be sure that he was doing what the President wanted. Well, he didn't like that, because he treasured this direct relationship.

I encouraged his direct relationship with Nixon, for a not particularly noble motive. Which was that I spent hours and hours and hours, as my notes show, or at least somewhat indicate, and as the [White House] tapes will show, sitting with Nixon. Using up time. Being a sounding board, or a listening board. It was time that often really frustrated me, to have to spend sitting in with Nixon, with the President, when I could be out getting things done that needed to be done. Or dealing with problems that needed to be handled. Consequently, when Colson came along, here was a guy that in one area, which was one of the areas I had to sit and listen to, was these attacks. These things [like] "I want everybody out in thirty days," and that kind of stuff, that Nixon found a kindred spirit in Colson. Enjoyed going through that with him, as he did with me. So, he was willing to do a lot of that with Chuck. I encouraged that, because it gave me time not to have to be with Nixon. To do other things that were more important to do.

But I knew that it was also important that the President have somebody he could sound off to, and Chuck filled a gap there. The danger was that he would carry out things that shouldn't be carried out. I tried to circumvent that danger. I've always wondered to what degree Watergate was a result of my

letting that go too far. Something that.... Obviously, [E. Howard] Hunt was Colson's guy, and I don't know.... I still don't know what put Watergate together. Whatever it was, I've always wondered, and I've always had the feeling that the President wondered, what Colson's role was. Or maybe knew what Colson's role was.

RHG: There's one entry about Colson, if I can find it here. It's toward the end of your journal. It's in, actually, the Watergate section. April 23, 1973: "Nixon is very concerned about Colson. Nixon told [Ronald] Ziegler he talked to Colson yesterday, and had Ziegler call him. Then, Nixon told Ziegler not to talk to him again, at all. And said, 'I know now what kind of a man Colson is.'" Do you know the background of that?

HRH: Hmm. I don't remember that. The problem, in the journal, when we got into that area, I wrote stuff sort of cryptically sometimes, figuring I would understand it, and other people like you wouldn't, which is exactly what I wanted to have happen. Now, I don't understand it either. You get so far removed from it, it doesn't make any sense to me either.

RHG: Yeah. Nixon....

HRH: I'm trying to send myself a message there of some kind. I don't remember what it was.

RHG: Nixon apparently had had a conversation with Colson and, of course, the feeling I get was, that Colson...

HRH: Threatened him.

RHG: ...double-crossed, something, that was very, very bad from Nixon's point of view. As an extreme act of disloyalty, at

least.

HRH: Yeah.

RHG: There was another instance where--if I start looking for this, it might take awhile, but I remember basically what was going on--and that was, Colson had talked to [Jeb] Magruder. This was during the Watergate problems, too. Magruder kept changing his story about a number of things. This, particularly about you, and I guess Colson thought you and he were together. I mean, you and Colson were together. Colson told you that he had had a talk with Magruder, and that somehow the talk indicated that you were clear. And he had told Ehrlichman, on the same topic, [in an] earlier conversation, that he had a recording of the conversation with Magruder. You were very excited about that; Ehrlichman had told you about this, already. So, you said, "Well, I know you've got a recording. I'd like to hear the recording." Colson said, well, no, he doesn't have a recording. But he's got a transcript. You said, "All right, I'd like to see the transcript." And he said, "Well, somebody else has got the transcript." Then you said, "Well, all right. Could you ask whoever's got it to get it back to you, so I could see it?" Then he said, well, he's not sure he can do that. Do you remember that?

HRH: Sort of, yeah.

RHG: How did you feel about that?

HRH: I don't know. Obviously not very good. There's such a sequence there, and it's hard to hit a point, without going through all the context. To know what was happening at that moment. I know

that, I remember, that there was a lot of sort of flip-flopping on Magruder's part. You never knew exactly what he was going to say. I had the feeling, at that time, and I still have it, that Jeb had gotten himself caught up in lying so much, in so many ways, so many times--and differently--that he couldn't remember, himself, what was true and what wasn't true. He would say, at one time, he made a lot of directly contradictory, self-contradictory statements. As we got down to that period, when all this was really flaring up, I don't think Jeb knew what had actually happened. I would guess--I still have the feeling he probably doesn't know today, in some of those things.

I sure don't. At some points he said I got the results of the bugging, and at other points he said, "Well, I was assuming Bob got them, because Gordon Strachan got them." I guess they did establish that Gordon Strachan did get some of them. Then there's the question of whether I did. I don't think I did. I've always felt that I did not. It's never been proven that I did. I suspect that I didn't, because [there] was a monumental effort to prove that I did.

So much stuff came into my office, I can't categorically say nothing in that report ever came into my office, because I really don't know. It may well have. Those kinds of things you can't.... I don't know how you deal with.... I had the feeling, at that time, Colson was going through a thing of trying to establish a position for himself vis-a-vis his part in Watergate, or anything related to it. He wasn't clear as to what was the best position to establish. He was sort of floundering around,

trying to.... I don't think lying, necessarily, but I think probing. Trying to figure out. Should he ally himself with me, and get me innocent, and tie himself to me as my person, and therefore, innocent? Or, was there a danger that I was guilty, and he didn't want to be tied to me? He was playing, I think, Ehrlichman, and me, and the President, and other people off of each other.

RHG: It sounds like....

HRH: Sort of firing shots across the bow, and all that sort of thing.

RHG: Yeah. It sounds like he had cut loose, by that time, from the facts and the reality, and was floating around, trying to create a story.

HRH: Um hmm.

RHG: We'll get to that sort of issue a little later. I don't want to leave this new establishment, yet. Which is a phrase, by the way, that was used around the White House, wasn't it?

HRH: I guess so.

RHG: I see it in your notes quite often.

HRH: Yeah, I think so.

RHG: Nixon seems to be using it as an important term. After the election, Nixon designated the following month as the time when this transition to the new establishment was going to be accomplished. I think you all went up to Camp David for quite a long while.

HRH: We did.

RHG: Can you describe both what went on, and the reach of your hopes, as it were, when you were conducting your work?

HRH: Our time at Camp David, we went up, as I recall, pretty much right after the election, and we were there, basically, for tne whole month. It was done.... The President was with us. We didn't.... We said, "We're closeting ourselves." We said publicly, and made a point of it, "We're closeting ourselves to get all these things worked out. This is a transition period. We will be making annoucements from time to time, as specific results are carried out."

As I recall it now, the general sense of activity up there was the finishing up, the final polishing of the internal reorganization plan, the Super Cabinet plan. There was a lot of time spent with big charts, and organization charts, and assignments, and all that sort of thing. At the same time, tne personnel office, under Fred Malek's direction down in Washington was in an intense crash program of locating candidates for posts. We gave them posts, and they were working up dossiers, and getting materials together for Cabinet appointments, sub-Cabinet appointments, staff appointments, and the whole range of stuff within the new organization concept.

We worked out the musical chairs part, who was going to move to what, and that sort of thing, and who was going to be let out, and who was going to be brought in. Then, we started a process of bringing people up to Camp David. Cabinet officers, all the ones that were going to be asked to resign were brought up and asked to resign. The ones that were going to be asked to move to a different post were asked to do that. The ones that were going to be asked to stay on, were asked to do that.

I don't remember the specifics there; the other data would confirm all that. It was a very intense period; we worked our tails off. It was John, and I, and our key, close-in staffs. Larry [Lawrence Higby] was up there with me, and Tod Hullin, and a couple of others with John, and then larger groups, staff secretaries and people like that, when we needed more materials on things. John and I sort of alternated in the personnel shifting process. As someone would come up, I'd take one guy in tow, and be in with the President with him, and John would have the next one in the waiting room. Then I'd come out, and John's guy would go in. It was an efficient process of running people in and out, as we were going through the re-positioning, the personnel assignment stuff.

In each case, the concept of the Super Cabinet was articulated to the new appointees, and their position within it, either as a Super or as a Sub, was outlined. They were told, if they were Subs, that they were not going to be reporting directly to the President. They were going to be reporting to the President through this person. They were also told that, although they would be the Cabinet officer, and be reporting through a Super Cabinet officer to the President, they also were told who they were going to appoint as their deputy, or assistant, or whatever the senior alternate was in the Department, and why. They were told that they obviously didn't have to accept this, but their accepting it was the condition upon which they were going to be appointed to the post.

This was very specific, very airtight. Ken Rush was told he

was going to be Secretary of State. He was told Bill Casey was going to be his Under Secretary for Administration. He was told why. Of course, as Secretary of State, he was reporting directly to the President, so he didn't have a Super Secretary thing through him. But he was told how his relationship with Kissinger would work, and there was not going to be any more conflict between State and NSC. Those roles were going to be understand.

[Melvin] Laird was told he was leaving as Secretary of Defense. I think he had decided to leave, anyway. I think he had already indicated to the President he wanted to leave. He was moving out. Bill [William] Clements, I guess, we brought in as.... No, Eliott Richardson as Secretary of Defense, I think.

RHG: Right.

HRH: But we told Eliott Richardson that that was--I forget what the reason was--he was told what the reason was, but he was also told that his Under Secretary would be Bill Clements, and why. He didn't know Bill Clements. We said, "Fine. You can...." When I say "we", it's the President. I should not imp--. I was in the meeting, and I had put the script together, but the President carried it out. I participated, but it was basically the President telling these people. Richardson was told that he could go down immediately--Clements was available. We had Clements on standby. Clements was available. He could go meet with Clements, and decide whether he [was] acceptable to him. If he was, then fine, the appointment was set. If he wasn't, then that was too bad. We'd have to get a different Secretary of Defense.

We went through that kind of exercise, post by post, position by position. Basically removed the old Cabinet, and set up the new one. And the Sub-Cabinet, at least as to the senior deputy in each Department. They had to accept this: we had worked out movement of a lot of our middle-level White House staff people into Cabinet posts. Bud [Egil] Krogh was to go over as Under Secretary of Transportation, I think it was. Things like that. Which was recognizing, and this thing that we had asked these people, when they submitted their resignations: tell us what they wanted to do. We fed that into this mill that we were working with there. Tried to move people into things that they wanted to do. Obviously, only when we felt they were qualified--it was a good appointment from the President's viewpoint, too.

A lot of this was handled like the transition itself at the Pierre [Hotel], when Eliott Richardson said, "Yes," he would be Secretary of Defense, and accept Bill Clements, then the President and Eliott went out to the press at the airplane hangar at Camp David, and made their press announcement. We set up a press facility in the hangar out there. Went out and announced, "The new Secretary of Defense will be so-and-so." Just like in '68 we had done that with the transition at the Pierre. Gone down and announced them one by one. These changes were made, step by step, and announced, and then they were told to go down and get going. We'd move on to the next one. I think that pretty well sums that up.

RHG: Now, the election had crossed up your plans, to some degree, in

that you didn't get a Republican Congress, which I know earlier on in your planning for this changeover you had hoped to get. Your hopes were nonetheless fairly high for the new administration, were they?

HRH: Oh, yeah. Because the President got an incredible mandate. A sufficient mandate that he felt that if we started moving fast, and firmly, that we could get a lot of things through Congress. Also, we had devised these procedures, like in the reorganization, where we could do stuff by executive order. We didn't have to go through Congress. The thoughts were very high.

The other diversion at Camp David was the Vietnam negotiations, which we thought had been consummated in October. Had fallen apart. And then were back in the tough negotiating stage. There was a lot of back and forth with Kissinger in Paris, and Kissinger to Bill [William] Hyland, back here. So we were on the phone to the Sit [Situation] Room from Camp David quite a bit, working through the questions of the finalizing of the Vietnam peace agreement. Which finally came about in January (which was after we'd been at Camp David). The Christmas bombing came on while we were up there, and the mining.... The mining and bombing of Hanoi had come on earlier. That was early in '72 [May]. The Christmas bombing, was that earlier, too? No, the Christmas bombing, that was when....

RHG: The negotiations fell apart just before the election, as I remember. Then Nixon responded with bombing, and then the peace agreement, I think was in January.

HRH: January, right. But there was a lot of Vietnam related activity

in that Camp David period, and it got more intense in December. Culminated with the agreement in January.

RHG: Did you feel that Nixon was developing a vision of his second term?

HRH: Well, he had one, prior to the election. I think he was fleshing it out. He was more concentrating on the specifics at that time, because we had a lot of decisions that he had to make. Alternatives on Cabinet appointments. Who are we going to put in these posts? All that, and then he had to do the implementing of that. Meeting with these people, telling them how it was going to work. We briefed them first.

That's it. They would come in, like an Eliott Richardson would come in. He would meet with Ehrlichman and/or me, depending on the way the scheduling was going. We'd explain this whole new structure. We'd show them the organization chart, and explain the whole structure of the reporting process, and everything else. How it was going to work. Explain to them that the President's position was, and obviously you're going to be meeting with the President in a few minutes. You can get into this in any way you want to with him. His position is, this is an either/or. You take it, or you don't. Some of them raised, questioned that with the President. Some of them just accepted it the way it was, and so on. I'd forgotten that the President didn't have to go through this briefing of the new plan with everybody. We did that prior to their going in to meet with the President. He in effect said, "What you just heard is correct, and that's the way it's going to be. Now, this is what I want

you to do." It goes from there.

RHG: I know that Nixon was concerned that he had accomplished all four of his big plays, as he called them, almost in the first term. Vietnam being the last one, was in January [1973]. He mentioned this to you, as I remember, several times, that our big plays,...

HRH: There aren't going to be any more big plays.

RHG: ...there aren't going to be any more of them. We have to rely on little things. How was he planning to adjust to that?

HRH: See, he wasn't worried about it at that point, because he was riding on the reorganization and getting all these right people in place. Then, putting all that together and moving ahead with a positive program. Cleaning up the whole Vietnam thing. Working ahead on what you could do with what we called "the peace dividend" (the fact that we weren't spending all the money on the war, we'd have some money to spend on doing some things that you wanted to get caught up on here). Going anead with SALT [Strategic Arms Limitation Talks] and the Soviet negotiations. Going ahead with China and expanding it--we had done the China overture, but there had been nothing really to follow up and capitalize on it. Middle East question. There were a lot of foreign policy things that he saw as potential big plays, in a sense, going forward.

Then, getting back to the whole domestic, economic thing. Getting back to a balanced Federal budget. There were a lot of challenges that were not necessarily big plays in the sense of China or something like that, but were big initiatives. Big things that needed to be done. He saw himself having the

opportunity to do them. Having the mandate, and having the war behind him. The problem of the demonstrations, and all that stuff, not to face any more. A revised Cabinet and executive branch structure and personnel, that was the excitement of moving ahead with a new team kind of stuff. It was very much a, through all that period, very, very upbeat, positive, on all our parts. It was very hard work. We were really wearing ourselves down, but doing it with a lot of enthusiasm. As was the transition at the Pierre [Hotel]. That was round-the-clock work that was horrible. But it was very exciting.

RHG: Just thinking of my reading of your journal through the entirety of the first term, I got two impressions (might be completely wrong) about changes in the Nixon administration, or in the President, and consequently his administration. One was that I felt that he had decided, more or less by the election time in 1970, and certainly by the end of the first term, that he was going to be more conservative a President than he had started out as being. Do you think that's true?

HRH: Well, my hesitation, the pause, is because I don't immediately think it's true, and I'm not sure. My first problem is defining conservative. I'm not sure what you mean by a more conservative President.

RHG: Well, for one thing, he was going to watch the budget more closely. He had instructed Weinberger to do a lot of cutting for the fiscal year of 19--....

HRH: Of course, he instructed Mayo to do it right at the outset, too.

RHG: Did he? But he was listening to people like Moynihan. And

getting involved in some things like revenue sharing which ultimately were quite expensive. The welfare program failed. Got involved in an environmental program of some magnitude. It would just take me too long to find the entries.

HRH: He was basically dragged into the environmental program. You see those as liberal programs, and that he wasn't going to carry those forward.

RHG: Right.

HRH: OK, in that sense, I think you're probably right. I think he allowed himself, and pushed also, to look at these forward reaching things. He saw that they didn't gell the way he wanted them to, in some cases. I think in that sense he probably was aiming towards more conservativism. There's no question that he was going to push very hard for continuation of economic reform. He was very ambivalent about the wage-price freeze thing and all that he had gotten into in the August summit business. He was concerned about not getting back into things that he didn't really believe in. He wanted to get back at welfare reform in a way that would work. He was determined to establish a balanced budget, de facto, and a procedure to maintain a balanced budget. Get the government on a basis where it realistically could move forward on a balanced budget basis. He was very chagrined that he had failed to balance budgets, although he must feel pretty good now, looking at himself by comparison [Laughter].

RHG: Yes.

HRH: His big thing, the thing that really excited him, was this structure of peace. That was, I'm sure, in the second term he

would have worked at those other things or had other people working at those other things, but I think his thrust would have been on the world scene. His personal thrust. I think he would have insisted that things go forward on things like welfare reform, and maybe modification and improvement of revenue sharing and working in areas like that. Trying to get the school desegregation issue cleared up and settled, although I think he felt he had made quite a little progress in that area. The environmental thing, as I said, he was pushed into that. That John pushed him hard on. Other people did. He was not really a believer in his own environmental programs, and it's ironic that EPA [the Environmental Protection Agency] and NOAA [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration] and some of those things ended up being his creations. They weren't really his bag.

I think in the sense that you explain it, you're right. There would have been a move to more conservatism, or at least a move away from some of the liberalism that was maybe out of character. That had gone beyond the normal character. The normal Nixon philosophy.

RHG: Perhaps partly too, it was a feeling that he had tried early on to court the liberals, to some degree, and that he wasn't happy with the way they responded to him.

HRH: There would have been an enormous effort on that New Majority, New Establishment, that kind of stuff, trying to build a new coalition. He was really caught up with that thought. I wouldn't be surprised if there hadn't been some reopening of the question of another [political] party, again. A whole political

realignment.

RHG: Which he wanted to call a conservative party, basically...

HRH: Right.

RHG: ...it was always in the title "conservative" to draw the.... I guess to let some of the liberal Republicans go, and get all the conservative Democrats feeling that that was the biggest group in the country.

HRH: Right. You know, it's interesting, but a lot of consumer research polls and so forth--analysis--showed that while a minority of the people.... Less people called themselves Republicans than called themselves Democrats. But, more people called themselves conservatives than called themselves liberals. Nixon's point was, Republican is the wrong name. People don't want to be Republicans. People do want to be conservatives. Therefore, we should put conservative in the name. Call people what they consider themselves to be. Give them a rallying point at which to gather where they feel they belong.

Of course, the southern conservatives, there were lots and lots of people who did regard themselves as conservatives, but would never call themselves Republicans. Nonetheless, they went to the polls and voted Republican, at least on the national basis.

RHG: Now, the second generalization that I was--feel less certain about this one--but that I wanted to make was the feeling that I got, as I went through the journal, that the dark side of Nixon got darker. As I went on, I felt that he didn't respond always--and this was a cumulative problem--gracefully to the criticism

that he got as President. As the months accumulated and finally the years accumulated, his outbursts against his critics and opponents seemed more frequent and more virulent.

HRH: I don't have your advantage of having read my journal all the way through, even though I wrote it. But that was a long time ago. I guess my broad sense of that would be that you're probably right, but I don't know to what degree, and whether it was a linear acceleration, or whether it was blips up and down. Also, I have a little caution in my mind that you might be misled by my journal in the sense that I may well have been more forthcoming in the latter part of the effort than I was.... At the beginning, I was in much more awe of the President, the Presidency, of Washington, the White House, and more caught up with the positive things. All the new stuff I was being exposed to, and all that. I would suspect that the journal shows evidences, not consciously maybe, but evidence of some of that. I may well have....

Also, I was very leery of doing the journal. Of committing myself to print, or later to tape, on a concurrent basis. It took me quite a while before I think I let my discipline down to the point where I put secret things in there--national-security type secret things in there. A lot of them I never did put in. And some of the negative personal things, maybe. As time went on, I think I got more used to dealing with cataclysmic secrets and the dark side, as you called it, of Nixon type things. Less reticent to record them in some form. Or maybe, recorded them in more detail, or more strongly, than I did in the early stages.

What I'm saying is, there may be a bias within the journal itself that may have partly led you to that conclusion. In saying that, I would go back to saying that that's probably right, anyway. The problems got bigger. The [Vietnam] war didn't end. The critics got worse. The frustrations of more and more he saw that we weren't getting done what we wanted to get done. The people weren't acting the way he wanted them to act. The stars didn't shine as bright. That kind of thing. So there was an erosion factor there. If it didn't make the dark side get darker, it at least made the bright side get less bright. [Laughter] So, I think that's probably.... In a very broad sense, there's validity to that.

RHG: It was a very difficult time in the country's history, and Nixon happened to be the President who was elected at that time. Perhaps an oversensitive man, in many ways. Contrasting him with Reagan, Reagan always seems to, at least publicly, laugh and smile at his critics. Nixon had a lot of trouble doing that, I feel. He was President at a time when there was--somewhere in the journal one of you says, "This is the hardest time to be President since the Civil War."

HRH: Right.

RHG: The country.

HRH: Someone else told him that, that "You have the most difficult Presidency since Lincoln, who had the most difficult Presidency of all. You were President in the most difficult time for the country, of any President except [for] Lincoln."

RHG: It was a very difficult time for anybody to be President, and it

was a very difficult time for an oversensitive man--a brooding man--to be President.

HRH: I think that's right. I think it was.

RHG: Well, we've got a little bit of tape left on this side. Let me just go through this one segment of notes and see if there's anything else to.... Any interesting entries we might comment on. This is November 14, 1972. You have an insight here. This is just at the time, in fact, when you're at Camp David, doing this transition. "The President doesn't want to work with only a few people, as we've assumed. Rather, he wants better people that he can work with."

HRH: OK, this comes out of a long session on November 14th, and I suspect it probably was up at Camp David.

RHG: Um hmm, right. Um hmm.

HRH: That Ash and Malek and Ehrlichman had had with the President on the whole reorganization question. My insight is something that occurs to me as I'm looking back at that meeting, and the discussion there. It's dawned on me, that we had started out this reorganization thing on the basis that the President wanted to work with fewer people. That he didn't want to have so many people he had to work with. Now, from a management theory viewpoint, that was a sound basis. He shouldn't be working with as many people as he theoretically has to. But he didn't work with anywhere near as many as he theoretically had to, anyway. What we were trying to do was put that into structural form.

What's dawning on me here is, that I've misread the President in thinking that what he's trying to do, or

subsconsciously wants to do, is to work with less people. That's not the problem. The problem isn't that there were too many people. It's that they weren't good enough people. I--that's an insight that I think was right, and that I hold. I don't think it bothered him, having to work with a lot of different people, as long as each of those people was someone that he felt was very good. Was very responsive. Was very productive to work with. In other words, he liked to work with people that he liked to work with. He didn't like to work with people he didn't like to work with. It didn't matter how many of each there were. If there were a lot of people he liked, he'd work with a lot of people. If there were a lot of people he didn't like, he wouldn't work with many people. That's what decided the number thing, rather than the numbers themselves, per se.

I think that's a valid insight. I think he's the kind of person who is looking for.... He is a very intelligent, intellectual, insightful, and creative-minded person. I think he needed minds like his own, at least as sharp as his own, to hone himself on. Dealing with mediocre people was very difficult for him. I should have seen that right at the beginning, because it is for me. I love to work with people that are superior to me, and that are a real challenge to me. I hate to work with people that are inferior. That's really where he was.

RHG: So he wasn't terrifically lucky, in his Presidency, with all of the people that came to him to work with.

HRH: Not with all of them, no. But he was with a lot. There were some very outstanding people in there. Some that he felt were

more outstanding than I felt they were. He may well have been right in his evaluation rather than mine. You say he wasn't very lucky. I think I'd say that the chances of being lucky in that endeavor are slim, and he may have been very lucky that he got as many as he did. Certainly there were a lot of people that weren't--that didn't meet the standard. And people that he thought met the standard that then disappointed him.

RHG: Well, now here's a Nixon comment, somewhat related to this. January 9th, 1973. The President says, "More important than ability is loyalty. It's better to have a dumb loyalist than a bright neuter."

HRH: That's a direct contradiction of what I was saying before. The way I would explain the contradiction, I think, is that what he really.... I don't think he really meant it comparatively. I think what he meant is, loyalty is an absolute quality that must be required. Without loyalty, brightness is no great asset. A disloyal bright person is worse than a loyal dumb person, because the loyal dumb person at least won't do you any harm. Where the disloyal bright person will do you harm. That doesn't mean that's what you seek. What you seek is not loyal dumb people; you seek loyal bright people. In other words, you don't settle for only one. If you could only have one, you're better off with loyalty than brightness. But what you've got to find is both. We saw--we had some disloyal bright people in the administration. People that were bright, and turned out to be disloyal. Disloyal in a broad sense, that they didn't stay with the crowd. That created problems.

[End cassette two, side two]

[Begin cassette three, side one]

RHG: We mentioned yesterday the rather awesome Watergate industry that has sprung up around this episode. I am not a Watergate buff in any way. I feel rather humble in approaching this issue, because I know there's a library full of testimony. Then, right next to it, another library full of wild theories about the testimony. So, all I really want to do, here, is essentially go through the notes that I've taken from your journal--things that you chose to write about the Watergate episode--and to ask you the same question in every instance. Which is: what were your motives and feelings when these things were happening?

The reason I say that is, there's something about this.... Just to step aside for a moment about who did what to whom, and so on, there's something about it that doesn't quite hold together for me. In the sense that there are people that I know to be good and dedicated people, who got into this thing, and I, frankly, just can't make the motives fit. So, I ask you, just how you felt, and what the motives were?

HRH: OK.

RHG: You told the President about the....

HRH: Before you do that, let me make an opening comment on the Watergate thing, vis-a-vis what we're going to do right now. It may not work out, but let me try and articulate an approach that might add something, rather than just rehashing stuff. That is, I'm not going to try to be precise about dates and specific events, and all that. That is so carefully calibrated by all the

existing testimony that I can't add anything to it by that. I'm going to stay with you through the journal, so what I have before me is what I wrote to myself, on any particular day. I can deal with what, I think now, was my motive or my thought, at the time I wrote that. Not try to get into adding to the factual stuff, but only to what was my role and process and part in it.

RJG: Right

HRH: Which I've never tried to do before, and, obviously, nobody else can do. I think that would be a major addition to the Watergate lore. An attempt to try and define the whole case, or solve it, would not be productive.

RHG: I would just add one thing, if I could, and that is, also the way you read the President's reaction.

HRH: OK.

RHG: Right.

[Interruption]

RHG: On June 20, 1972, you told the President about the Watergate break-in. "Last night," the 19th. On the 20th you entered in your journal.

HRH: We were at Key Biscayne, and I was at the Key Biscayne Hotel. He was off at Walker's Cay, I think--an island that he used to go to frequently.

RHG: You talked about it in some detail on June 20th. Nixon, then, is responding: "We have to hope the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] doesn't go beyond the necessary in developing evidence. Keep a lid on that. Keep lid on the testimony." What was your response to that?

HRH: I have to assume that what we're concerned about there, on the FBI not going beyond the necessary, is that they don't.... It's the political concern that the President's got. That what he recognizes this as a political threat. In other words, somebody's done something here that the opposition can make something out of. He assumes, if the opposition can make something out of anything, they will make something out of it. Therefore, it's a danger to us in that, if they stir this up into a big thing, it's going to hurt us politically. It's going to be a problem.

I can't remember, at that stage, how much I knew what he had been told. Whether I knew to what degree the Re-election Committee was involved, and all that sort of thing. That would have been a factor, depending on.... Our knowledge was progressive. We learned a little more every hour, or every day, or every week, as time went on, about things. A lot of what we got was contradictory during that period. So, we'd learn things, and then we'd find out the next day that wasn't the case. Then we'd learn something else. There were several people involved at this stage. I was at Key Biscayne. All I knew was what I was getting on the phone from.... First of all, what we got from the press reports, which is how I first learned about it. [Ronald] Ziegler came along the beach and told me. Phone conversation, I guess--I forget all the details, and that's what I shouldn't try to get into, anyway--from Magruder, I think. Then I think I talked to Ehrlichman, and Ehrlichman talked to [John] Dean, and people started ginning up information. Trying to find out what

had happened, and who had done what, and all that.

We only got the information, step by step. Or, I only got the information step by step. What I got, I gave to the President. Is it your assumption it's the President that's saying, "Hope the FBI doesn't go beyond the necessary," or is it me that's saying that?

RHG: I take it to be the President.

HRH: OK. I don't know. It might--what I'm saying is that it may be that it's my saying it, and that it's part of what I reported to the President. This is one of the things that people are saying is, "We've got to hope the FBI doesn't go beyond." Which would imply there are other things, which, of course, it turned out that there definitely were. In that what became catalogued as the "White House horrors" things.

There were other things that could lead to it. I know, and I don't think it was at this time, but I know there was concern as soon as we knew that [E. Howard] Hunt was involved. I'm not sure how soon we knew that. When we knew that Hunt was involved, there was concern because Nixon knew, and I found out, that Hunt was this guy that had been at the White House, working for Colson. Now here he was over at the Committee, involved in this thing. We did not want the FBI working their way back in that. For a minute I ought to give my containment versus conspiracy thing, very quickly, to get it into this record. Because we're right at exactly that point, right here at the beginning.

Not at this stage, but as this developed, my concern, and the President's concern, as I understood it, vis-a-vis Watergate,

and John Ehrlichman's, and the people I was working with, and, as far as I knew, John Dean's, at that stage, was that the Watergate incident, and the investigation of that incident, and the publicity regarding it, and everything else, be contained to Watergate per se. In other words, there had been a crime committed, there had been a break-in. That had to be investigated, pursued, and dealt with. My view was, investigate, pursue, and deal with that, but contain your investigation to that.

The political danger, to us, and perhaps substantive danger, as it was developed in the next few days, later, national security type stuff that was raised at one point, and all that, was that the investigation would go beyond Watergate, would be politically, or, operationally at the Bureau, inspired to look into.... This would lead to other things. In other words, Howard Hunt being a specific case. Here is Howard Hunt. You find out that he was Watergate. Aha, who was he? You found out he used to work at the White House. Aha, what did he do at the White House? He broke into Daniel Ellsberg's.... Aha, why did he do that? Aha, the Pentagon Papers. [Yeoman Charles E.] Radford. All these things that you get involved in.

Each of those had the potential, which it certainly achieved, of becoming a major political problem, as well as a substantive problem. All of those were problems that I wanted to avoid, and I felt, all through that time, that it was quite proper to avoid those problems. In other words, there was no call for an investigation to go beyond the Watergate thing

itself. There was nothing that said that once a guy burgles a house, then track down all of his other crimes. He's charged with one crime. You investigate, prove that crime, indict him, and convict him, and punish him for it, and that's that.

I'm not implying that the other things were crimes. This clearly was. We truly regarded it as what Ron Ziegler called it: a third-rate burglary. Even the people at the Hofstra [conference on the Nixon presidency] agreed it was a third-rate burglary, in pretty general consensus, I think. If you limited yourself, simply, to the break-in at the Democratic National Committee. Obviously, Watergate now encompasses much more than that in it's terminology.

The point is, containment versus cover-up. My point was, containment was, what I perceived to be, and still believe to be, a perfectly legal and legitimate effort. Basically a public relations effort, and political effort, to keep the Watergate investigation limited to Watergate. I saw--I now define, after the fact--cover-up as being an illegal effort to avoid the bringing to task of people who committed crimes. In other words, obstruction of justice. I tried to get into that point at the Senate Committee, I tried to get into it in my trial, and everywhere else. I never succeeded. But, I still believe it's a valid point. That containment was one thing; cover-up was another. They weren't one and the same. They became meshed, and then became one and the same, over time, but I would say that my activity, and my motivation was containment, not cover-up. I couldn't have cared less how many people went to jail for the

Watergate break-in. I did care about an investigation going into some of these other things we talked about, and all of the things that it did go into, ultimately.

RHG: The next day, Colson comes in. Nixon's thinking about Watergate. Colson comes in "presumably to cheer him up, but got into strategy on it, which is exactly what I don't want to do with Colson." Why not?

HRH: Colson's not the.... Colson is the kind of guy that would immediately jump on something like Watergate. Love the sensationalism and the excitement involved in it, and want to get into investigating and attacking the people doing.... Playing the game. Again, that's exactly what I didn't.... Following my containment thing, I.... To me, the point of the whole exercise here is contain this thing. Keep it at Watergate, which is a third-rate burglary. Doesn't amount to anything. Somebody did something stupid. I can't conceive of why they did it. I don't care why they did it. If that comes out, why, fine. If it doesn't come out, why fine. But, don't make a big "shamaaz" out of it. And Colson's thing, always, would be that. Plus, he loves to get into this kind of stuff <u>ad nauseum</u>, in terms of exploring, "Well, what do you think this?" And, "Maybe they did that," and all that, which was.... I never did have time for that kind of stuff, and no interest. So, I still don't. People want to go into all their Watergate theories. They aren't very interesting anymore. They never were.

RHG: Would containment mean, then, that because it's distinct from cover-up, distinct from obstruction of justice? There's no

intent to obstruct justice; there's an intent to keep justice within the framework of the crime that's been committed.

HRH: Right.

RHG: That, then, would allow the investigation of, and, if necessary, prosecution of, everybody who was involved in that specific crime.

HRH: Right.

RHG: The break-in.

HRH: Right.

RHG: OK.

HRH: Yes.

RHG: I'm just reading some more of this, the 21st. "Nixon's main concern is to keep the White House out of it."

HRH: That would be another reason not to get Colson involved. Our whole position on the campaign, and the reason CRP was set up to begin with, was the President's order that the White House is to stay out of the political campaign. We're setting up a separate entity; moving Mitchell over to run it; we'll move White House.... Anybody in the White House who is going to be working in the campaign, like Buchanan, if he were going to be in the thing, like we talked about before. Jeb Magruder. Anybody else like that. Move them out of the White House. Over to CRP. Let them work over there. The White House people are to stay with the business of government. This is the President saying, "I don't want them in the campaign." Now, obviously, you have to do some coordinating in relationship with the campaign, but it was a very strong point that he had made early on. Way, much earlier

than this. Six months earlier than this. That he wanted the campaign totally separate from the White House.

That thinking permeated my approach to any political question or issue that came up. That's a CRP matter, not a White House matter. Turn it over to them. This clearly was a CRP matter, and the President is saying exactly the same thing he'd been saying six months earlier. "Keep it out of the White House." He knew, just like I did, the tendency for all of us.... When something big comes along, everybody wants to get into it. Or something controversial, or something interesting, or mysterious, or anything else. He knew, if this built up, White House people were going to start getting involved in it. "Keep 'em out."

Now, you can say then, why did we have John Dean do anything in it? Ehrlichman put Dean on the Watergate thing right at the early time, while we were still down at Key Biscayne, I believe. For exactly that same reason. Someone at the White House had to be aware of what was going on in the political campaign. Basically, that was me. I was the senior liaison with John Mitchell. John Mitchell, the candidate's campaign manager, had to have a relationship with the candidate, and that was through me. And that was fine. OK, as you get into a specific like this, somebody at the White House had to stay on top of this in terms of being able to answer the President's questions about what was going on. To provide any information or knowledge from the White House, or from the Committee to the White House, that was necessary. Rather than John [Ehrlichman] getting bogged down

in it, or my picking that up--because it was a low level chore--he [Ehrlichman] assigned John Dean to it. I think that's the whole point of getting Dean in there, at the outset.

RHG: "E suggests moving the guilt level up to Liddy. Having him confess, and then going forward from there."

HRH: You get into the.... Now I have a problem because I don't know what we knew and what we didn't know, at that stage. Or what John knew, and John didn't know. John and I were on the phone at that time; I was still in Key Biscayne, I think. Maybe not. 21st. Maybe we were back.

RHG: I think you were back by then.

HRH: OK. By then, then we probably knew some things, because John.... Things had been happening over that weekend, so we were probably back. He probably knows that--maybe this is by the time that Magruder had said he had told Liddy to do this. We may have known that, at that point. We did, somewhere along the line, although Magruder went back and forth on that too, as I recall. The point would be, here, Ehrlichman doing exactly what we aren't supposed to be doing, is the White House getting into it. Just talking about it, I think. Saying, "Let it go up to Liddy." I guess they had already traced it to Liddy. But maybe not to Hunt, yet. Maybe that was it. Hopefully, letting it stop at Liddy. Letting Liddy confess, and go forward from there. Which I think Liddy agreed to do. I think maybe....

See, this is the problem. You get bogged down in all of these damn details. Forget the motivation. The motivation was to get the thing resolved at the level where it would stop. The

point here is, if it stops at the.... If the guilt level moves up to the Liddy, let him confess, and then you forget the thing. I guess I'm saying--or maybe Ehrlichman is--the problem is, we can't get away with this, because Liddy didn't have the authority to commit the amount of money. So, Magruder would be the first possible point of sufficient responsibility. They won't want to do that.

That's what you're getting to the desire on the [Re-]election Committee's part--that's the "they"--to try to keep the culpability level below a campaign official. Which would be Magruder. In other words, keep it at the Liddy level, hopefully. I know that was a time when we didn't want Hunt involved because of his previous involvement at the White House. I don't remember when that was.

RHG: Now, this could be read, though, as an attempt to create the situation.

[Interruption]

RHG: We were talking about this entry on the 21st...

HRH: Yeah.

RHG: ...and I had just suggested that I think that this could be read, and will be read by some historians in the future.... I think that you and others in the White House were trying to arrange the conditions of this crime, rather than discover them.

HRH: Um hmm. Um hmm. I can see the potential for that in this. I don't accept that as the fact, because it wasn't. I know.... We ran into things all the way through in the Watergate case as evidence came up, testimony came up, and so forth, that cast a

very questionable shadow on specific things. And some that were very hard to explain, are still hard to explain for me. Part of that is simply because there still is a very basic mystery hanging over Watergate. We just don't know. You can come up with theories, but they don't totally hold up, either.

RHG: I want to read two things together.

HRH: Yeah.

RHG: One is the last sentence in the entry of the 23rd, June. "We talked to Walters and had that worked out." Then, on July 6th, about two weeks later, "Walters has apparently finked out and spilled the beans to Pat Gray, which complicates the issue substantially." This refers to what's become known in the lore as the "smoking gun" conversation, and what followed it. What were your feelings when you were going through this, making the decision to talk to Walters; talking with him? What were your feelings about what you were saying, and doing?

HRH: Boy, that's hard to reconstruct at this time. I was sort of bewildered by this whole thing at that stage, and the instructions.... The suggestion that was raised, or the recommendation, whatever it was that came to me from Dean, and, as I understood it, to him from Mitchell. Or that he had discussed with Mitchell, although now I understand Mitchell says he had no conversation with Dean about this subject. But anyway, was that the FBI thinks there's a CIA involvement here, and the FBI is looking for guidance. All that stuff that's on the "smoking gun" tape that I reported to the President. The President's instructions to me, then, were: "You and John," (I

think he specified John [Ehrlichman]; if he didn't, somehow John got drawn into it, too) "meet with [Richard] Helms and Walters at CIA, and tell them that the President wants them to talk to the FBI, and tell the FBI not to expand their investigation on this...."

At that point, it was a specific point about this [Kenneth] Dahlberg money source. What he was concerned with there was, as I understood it, the source of the Dahlberg money. Which was Dwayne Andreas, a Hubert Humphrey supporter who had made a major contribution, and who, unfortunately.... It was his money, given to Dahlberg to give to the Committee, that was then washed in a Mexican bank or something. Brought back, and was the money they found on the burglars. But there was clearly, and this was the point of concern as I understood it at that time, I think, no connection between either Dahlberg or Dwayne Andreas, and Watergate, or the burglary, or anything else. Except for the fact that, by pure accident, it was.... When somebody at the Committee gave money to Hunt to give to the burglars--or to Liddy, or whatever it was--it was money that was traceable to the Dahlberg donation. We didn't want that traced, as I understood it.

I don't think that bothered me. You can argue now it should have bothered me, because that's getting on the fringe, maybe, of obstructing justice, because where the money came from is important. I really don't think I thought it through, to that extent, and I think I was perfectly happy with the concept that.... I understood the fact that we didn't want the Andreas

contribution to be made public, to become known, because of his.... His contribution had been made with the clear, very strong understanding, I was told, that it was not to be attributed to him. That seems like a minor consideration at this point, but it seemed like something important.... All of it seemed like minor stuff, at this point.

Nonetheless, what I was told to do was tell Helms and Walters, I guess, not to track this through. Then, there's all this (to me) mysterious stuff that's on the June 23rd tape--the smoking gun tape--where the President gets into telling me it has to do with the Bay of Pigs, and the CIA other problems that they don't know about.

RHG: That wasn't what was in your mind, then?

HRH: Huh?

RHG: That wasn't what was in your mind when you were meeting with Walters? What you just described?

HRH: Yeah, it was in my mind, because the President had told me to raise it. See, I met with Walters at the President's instruction. In that instruction, the President gave me specifics of things I was supposed to raise with--it was Helms and Walters--about the CIA and the Bay of Pigs. I couldn't, you know.... This, to me, was--I remember thinking (that I do [remember], because it was so strange) that this was kind of bizarre. But, he told me to do it, and I was used to dealing with things that I didn't know what I was doing. Things with Henry [Kissinger] for instance, on the negotiations, and stuff like that. I was told, "Tell the President that somebody said

'No' on the such-and-such." I didn't know what I was saying. I just told the President that. He knew what I was telling him, but I didn't. That didn't bother me. One of my roles was as emissary between the President and other people, when they couldn't get directly to the President. That was the case here. The President told me, "Go meet with these guys, and this is what you're supposed to tell them. Don't carry the investigation any further than where you are on this money source." So, I did.

RHG: So you were conveying, really, two messages to Walters. The one about Andreas, which you did understand, perfectly.

HRH: No, I didn't say anything about Andreas. It was only, "Don't go any further." The reason was for it.

RHG: You understood that was the reason why you were conveying this messsage.

HRH: That was my understanding. It was not the message I was to convey.

RHG: But you were using another message which, really, you didn't understand.

HRH: About the Bay of Pigs.

RHG: Right.

HRH: Which I still don't understand. But, I'm told, now.... These same guys that are writing the book that get into the Yeoman Radford affair, also are heavily into this, because they've now discovered that, first of all, Ken Dahlberg was a CIA asset. Secondly, that the CIA had talked to Gray earlier about doing the thing. There's a lot of mystery stuff that arises in this that there's no point in our getting into. There's some real

confusion, which leads to your next question, which is the next quote. "Walters has apparently finked out."

Walters wrote a phony memorandum of this conversation. But he didn't write it until a week after the conversation.

RHG: Why phony?

HRH: Phony in that it's not true. What Walters said in his memorandum is not what happened at the meeting. It's provably so, because Helms wrote a memorandum, that was not a memorandum.... Walters's memorandum was a memcon--a memordandum of the conversation for the file. What Helms wrote was an action memorandum within the CIA. It was a directive to Walters, for things that Walters was to do, while Helms was out of the country. Helms was leaving on a trip, or something. Was leaving instructions to Walters which were directly contrary to what Walters says in his memcon. The thing all gets crisscrossed. These guys lay it all out in the book, you can read the whole thing, if they ever get it published.

The point is, I don't know. I didn't know then, and I still didn't understand this. Virtually all of what I'm saying here is I'm reporting what someone else tells me, or what I've done as a result of what someone's told me to do there, in this case. And I didn't do very much of anything, in Watergate, other than this. I had a very limited involvement at this point.

RHG: Why did you have Ehrlichman with you at the meeting with Walters?

HRH: I don't know. I think the President told me to. If he didn't, then the only reason I can think of that I did, is that Ehrlichman and I often, in order not to get trapped by somebody--

especially dealing with the FBI or the CIA--would have someone else sitting in a meeting with.... If I were meeting with them, I'd have John sit in. If John were meeting with them, he'd have me sit in.

That goes back, for instance, to the thing that came out in this, also, that at one time the President wanted his brother [F. Donald Nixon] surveilled. Because at that time Bob [Robert] Cushman was the Deputy Director of the CIA, the President said to ask Cushman if he can have the CIA put a tail on Don, because he was trying to monitor his contacts with Howard Hughes's people. Ehrlichman was supposed to do that. Ehrlichman asked me to sit in the meeting with Cushman and him, when he asked Cushman to do it. I think he wanted a witness that saw what he had done, and all that. I may have had the same unconscious, or conscious, motivation in having Ehrlichman in this meeting. My recollection, though, is that the President told me to have Ehrlichman there. I haven't any idea why.

RHG: All right. January 8, 1973. To jump quite a ways forward. Now, this is my--these are my words--based on what I was hearing on this day, from the journal. The President, at this time--and it had been going on for some months--was allowing Dean to manage (I felt) the Watergate trial, monitoring....

HRH: I don't think "manage" was my word, was it?

RHG: No. These are all my words.

HRH: Because that doesn't sound right.

RHG: Well, monitoring....

HRH: Monitor would be more like it.

RHG: Right. Arranging the pleas of the major defendants. Overseeing the raising and dispersal of money...

HRH: Well....

RHG: ...for their legal fees, and other expenses.

HRH: In January? That doesn't make sense.

RHG: This had been going on in the Summer.

HRH: The President was allowing Dean? Do I say something about the President being involved?

RHG: Well, I didn't quote you here. And I just can't remember.

HRH: It doesn't make sense.

RHG: No. Maybe we should skip this one then. I've just summarized something that I've heard, and I don't have the entry in front of me.

HRH: Hmm!

RHG: The idea was that John Dean was transferring money to Howard Hunt and the other burglars for expenses.

HRH: But the President didn't know that.

RHG: He didn't know it?

HRH: No.

RHG: No?

HRH: And I don't think I did.

RHG: That was the question, was....

HRH: I know the President didn't. The first the President heard of that was when John Dean told him in March.

RHG: OK.

HRH: I think that's clearly established on the record.

RHG: Now, they....

HRH: I don't think it's ever been alleged that the President had any knowledge of that until Dean told him in March that there had been arrangements for money.

RHG: OK.

HRH: I think I did know about payments being made, and was told--I know I did, because I knew that Herb [Herbert] Kalmbach was involved in raising money for them. And, maybe--no, I don't think the President knew that, even, though, at that time. I guess he did. He didn't know Dean had anything to do with it, I don't think. I'm not sure that I knew Dean had anything to do with it. I probably did. I can't remember.

All that's really pretty much established on the public record. On the trial records, and the testimony.

RHG: I just wondered how you...?

HRH: I think what it was was.... My understanding was that we were supposedly.... These guys had gotten trapped in a stupid operation, but they were working at what they believed to be the orders of the Re-election Committee. And in some way, it was, at some level, the order. We knew it was at Liddy's orders. I always have suspected it was at Magruder's. And I wondered if it was at Mitchell's. Those are the mysteries that still aren't really answered. Liddy was an officer of the Re-election Committee, and it was at his orders. He's admitted that, I believe.

In any event, my understanding was that there was a need to provide money for these people. They had been jailed, without bail, or something. Or couldn't raise bail, or whatever it was.

Their families had problems. They were, in effect, caught in the line of duty. Agents caught in the line of duty are entitled to proper care during the time. The money was being paid to them for family subsistence: family needs, and that sort of thing. That's what I was told.

RHG: Were you willing to accept this concept of responsibility because they were more or less innocent parties who had accepted an order from an officer of the Committee for the Re-election?

HRH: I wasn't willing to accept the responsibility. I was willing to accept the decision by the Committee that they had a responsibility.

RHG: Right. That's right. You were...

HRH: I wasn't raising any money.

RHG: ...just returning the money to them. That $350,000, which is Committee money, that....

HRH: Right.

RHG: Right. But it was a valid concept that the Committee had a responsibility for these people, regardless of the virtues and vices of what they had done, because they had been acting under the direct orders of the Committee officers.

HRH: That's my view. That's my feeling now, as to what my feeling was, then. [Laughter] That's right. Sounds a little foolish today, I admit. The other thing you have to keep emphasizing here--you keep asking for my motives and reactions, and the President's--is that we're <u>focusing</u> on this. I wasn't. This is an item in my journal that night, so it was obviously something that was at some level of attention. I don't think it was the

only item in the journal for that day.

RHG: No, never. Not until March and April.

HRH: I would find it was only a minor item. It wasn't a matter of importance to me. They were saying, "This is what's happening." I'd say, "Oh."

RHG: All right. January 9th. "Dean reports that the Watergate defendants will plead guilty, and deny higher-ups in the White House were involved. Colson made the deal with [William] Bittman regarding Hunt. This lead to the deals with the other parties. So, there's no involvement with the White House. It's all indirect." How'd you feel about that?

HRH: I don't know. I think Bittman was Hunt's lawyer.

RHG: That's right.

HRH: So....

RHG: Now....

HRH: I know there was concern, there was talk at various times (it's probably reflected in some of these earlier things) about.... the question the President was always asking was, "Is the White House involved? Was anybody at the White House involved in this?" It seems to me that question arose, and was the question we were asking Dean, and Dean was asking the people that were involved over there. I think that the President always had a fear that Colson was involved. Now, "Colson made the deal with Bittman regarding Hunt."

RHG: May I tell you how this could be read? This is why I ask it.

HRH: Right. OK.

RHG: Is "someone in the White House staff...

HRH: Colson.

RHG: ...(Colson) is dealing through the lawyer with one of the defendants regarding the deal." The deal was that Hunt's financial requirements would be met.

HRH: Um hmm.

RHG: Presumably he would behave--I'm not sure in detail what this means--in some way that the person providing the money wants him to behave so that he would.... And then it says.... This deal, unspecified, somehow led to deals with the other defendants. Then the conclusion is, so there's no involvement with the White House. It's all indirect. That, of course, can be read as if the White House is making a deal with the defendants to behave in such a way so that they just keep quiet, and keep the White House out of it.

HRH: Um hmm.

RHG: My question is, how did you feel about this?

HRH: I don't know. I, again, don't know that I felt at all about it. I don't know that I analyzed it. I know, I would suspect that I was concerned that Colson was involved in any part of it, because he wasn't supposed to be. So that probably bothered me. The question of.... Are these my words? Did I say "made a deal with Bittman?"

RHG: These would be close. I haven't quoted them. So, they're close. I was listening to a tape here, so it's hard to make exact quotations.

HRH: Yeah, but it.... Talking about a deal does have an adverse connotation.

RHG: That's almost certainly the word in the journal. I wouldn't have written that down.

HRH: I don't know what my feeling was on it. I know there was concern, did anybody at the...? By this time.... They haven't gone to trial yet, have they? But they're about to go to trial, obviously. They're going to plead guilty instead of going to trial. There was concern about the effect of the trial. That if they went to trial, there was going to be a big to-do about it, and all. I think there was a question of whether they would or would not stand trial versus pleading guilty. There was a desire on the Committee's part--those people that were dealing with this at the time, and I don't think I....

I don't think the President was involved. I don't know whether I'm reporting this to the President or not. I probably was. Because he was watching, you know, with some level of interest, the process of the thing. But not with any great intensity.

The question of whether they're going to go to trial, (God, it's so hard to remember all this stuff!) whether they were going to go to trial or not. And not wanting them to go to trial. And there very well could be some kind of thing where they were persuaded that it would be to the national interest, or whatever motivation they were playing to with them, not to go to trial. But rather, to plead guilty, but that in pleading guilty to be sure that they don't nail somebody in the White House.

There again, I have no reason to believe, even to this day, that they could, or would have, nailed anybody in the White

House. So, I don't know why you would get any of that, except for the fact that assuring the President, maybe, that they.... Because I know he did ask that question, from time to time, because he was concerned: "Is someone from the White House involved?" That they would, in pleading guilty, also say, "No one in the White House was involved." Which, as far as I knew, was true.

Now, I've got to admit, and this is the thing I made the mistake on, all the way through here, in Watergate, is I didn't try to know more than what I did know. If I had known where the thing was ultimately going to go, or if I had used better judgment, or if it had been my responsibility (if it had been a White House matter), either I.... Or I would have put someone on the thing, on the basis of finding out what happened here, and pinning it down, getting it taken care of, and disposed of.

Instead, I purposely didn't ask whether Colson was involved, because, I guess, I probably had the feeling that, the same thing that I think the President had, a sort of nagging fear way back somewhere, maybe Colson was involved. I got to say, maybe Mitchell was involved. I still wonder that. I'm saying that without in any way accusing them, or on the basis of any knowledge that they were. I just wonder, I can't.... I don't have the positive answer as to who issued an order, and why he did it. And until I do, you can't help but wonder who issued the order, and why he did it.

RHG: On January 11th and 12th--and there was one mention of this earlier, as well--an issue comes up where Nixon wants Mitchell to

ask [Cartha D. "Deke"] DeLoach at the FBI if the man who bugged Nixon's plane for Lyndon Johnson in 1968 is still there. If so, Nixon wants to get some hard evidence that this was in fact done. Then it says, "Also ask George Christian to get Lyndon Johnson to use his influence to turn off Congressional investigations." Now, Nixon changed his mind later in the day, on the 11th, and said he didn't want it done.

But then he came back to it on the 12th. "LBJ angry that the White House might be thinking of using this plane bugging story to defend itself from the Watergate charges. Threatens to release cable which Nixon campaign sent to Saigon in 1968. DeLoach says he thinks that Johnson requested the Nixon plane be bugged, but the FBI didn't do it. Only checked phone calls and put a tap on the 'Dragon Lady's' phone"--Mrs. [Anna] Chennault.

Then, over a month later, February 8th, Nixon wants Don [Donald M.] Kendall to call DeLoach and tell him, that if the FBI finds anything on the 1968 Nixon plane bugging which DeLoach did not tell the White House about, he'll be fired. Can you say how you felt about this, as this was proceeding, and how serious it was?

HRH: This is sort of the counterattack type thing--political reaction. What obviously is implicit here, and coincides with what memory I have of it, that Nixon saw the.... We knew that our plane, or we understood--we had heard someplace--that the Nixon campaign plane had been bugged in 1968 by Johnson. By the FBI, or somebody, at Johnson's orders. Nixon, as he's worrying, apparently from what's in here, the concern at this moment is the upcoming

Congressional investigation, of the threat of a Congressional investigation. There is when Nixon's fears are being realized of the political bang that comes out of this, that the next phase after the routine Justice Department stuff is that Congress decides to get into it, and make a big thing out of it. Which is, of course, exactly what they did. That he's concerned about that. Understandably and justifiably, I would say. So, he's looking for a counterattack kind of thing, and I think it's putting some pressure on Johnson about the plane bugging incident as a way of trying to get Johnson to use his influence with the Democratic leadership in Congress to turn the thing off. On the basis of saying it's not in the national interest to pursue this any further.

Then he--I don't remember and I don't know why he changed his mind later in the day on having that done. But, obviously it was done, in a sense, apparently. Because on the 12th there's a report back that Johnson's mad about it, so somebody must have talked to Johnson. I must have had Christian talk to Johnson, and Johnson must have blown up. Somebody, obviously, has talked to DeLoach--probably Mitchell--saying, the plane wasn't bugged. Now, then, the reaction later is, Nixon, in thinking about that, a month later--and I don't know why, it obviously came up again somewhere--is saying, "Tell Kendall...." DeLoach worked for Kendall...

RHG: Oh!

HRH: ...at that time. DeLoach had left the FBI and was the director of security for Pepsico, or something like that. So, he wanted

Kendall to call DeLoach and say to DeLoach, "If the FBI finds anything on the bugging that you didn't tell us about, you're going to be fired." In other words, he wants Kendall to fire DeLoach if he's held something back from us. He's just putting the heat on DeLoach, via Kendall. I don't know what caused it to resurface like that out of the blue on the 8th of February.

RHG: Were you certain that your plane had been bugged?

HRH: No, we had understood it. I still don't know whether it was, or not.

RHG: What was he referring to here with this 1968 cable?

HRH: I don't know. I don't know whether that's a blind threat on his part, like the other one was on ours, or what. Johnson was convinced that Nixon was surreptitiously dealing with South Vietnam, via the "Dragon Lady", Madame Chennault.

RHG: Just one last quotation I want to look at, from the journal--at least near quotation. This is August 14th--going back into August [1972]. It's on the second page. It's Nixon saying, "Forget the legal question. Concentrate on the political, PR. Get the line out in our way. Have to shape..."

[Interruption]

[End cassette three, side one]

[Begin cassette three, side two]

RHG: All right, just to read this quote over again. Nixon: "Forget the legal question. Concentrate on the political PR. Get the line out in our way. Have to shape investigation at CRP to cover non-involvement of top officials. Put it at the lowest common denominator. The funds were misused. The culprits have left.

No one else is involved, but we must be sure of the Grand Jury. We must know what DOJ [the Department of Justice] is going to seek out of the Grand Jury." There are really two or three ideas there. Could you comment on those?

HRH: There, the counterattack, or dealing with the plan. He's saying --this is August, so it's a couple of months after a lot of these other things have happened--the investigation was going on. I guess Justice was heavily into it at that point. It's hard to put the frame of reference on it. The point, obviously, here is he's pushing for a continuing offensive. Keep the.... Concentrate on political PR; forget about the legal question. In other words, don't waste time on the legalities, the legal investigation. Get the PR line out.

In effect, I think he's saying that the PR line to get out is, admit that there was a mistake at the lowest level, in effect, that it goes at. That the funds were misused. The culprits have left. No one else is involved. That is partly--I was going to say wishful thinking--it isn't wisnful thinking--it's partly hopeful thinking. In the sense that, as far as we know, and as I recall, somewhere in this process, Nixon asked Mitchell if he [was] involved, or if anybody higher up was, and Mitchell said, "No." So, he's...

[Interruption]

HRH: ...going on the assumption that there is a lowest common denominator. Whatever the lowest level was. However high you have to go, in pinning this thing, pin it there. Stop it there. Stop the speculation. Run the PR thing. He's saying, "Determine

where your damages are. Take your damages. Take your losses, and cut." That's exactly what I think we should have done on day one. But we should have found out absolutely for sure what it was, and cut our damage level at that point. Instead of letting it keep spilling over, which is exactly what it did do. So, he's saying you've got to admit that the funds were misused--you can't deny that, they were. Make the point that the culprits have left the Committee now. Are we still in '72? Yeah.

RHG: Yes.

HRH: We're still working up to the election. So, what he's trying to do is get the issue moved out of the Committee, and say, that's that. What he doesn't say here, and I wish he had said--at least, it doesn't appear that he said here, and I don't remember that he did--is that we fired everybody. Well, he said, "The culprits have left." Everybody that was involved has been moved out. The problem is, what he didn't say is, "Pursue diligently within the Committee, and find out how high up it does go." I didn't say that either.

Both he and I, I think, had a lingering fear that it may go higher than we knew it did, and we didn't want to know that. It's the "need not to know theory" that Ollie [Oliver] North was working on, too, to some extent. I don't know. I still don't know, what I didn't know at that point. Because, I don't know if it goes higher up. Magruder sort of gave an answer to an extent, at the Hofstra thing [1987 conference on the Nixon Presidency]. But, Magruder's testimony was different, and Magruder's testimony changed. We were listening to testimony, at this point you

didn't know what.... Well, there wasn't testimony, yet, I guess. But, we were getting the reports from the investigation--what people said--and you didn't know what to believe. One guy would tell you, "That's not true;" the next guy would tell you, "Yes, he did." Either you have to decide which one's right, or you have to decide not to decide. And we decided not to decide. Which, in retrospect, was the wrong decision.

RHG: Yes, I could feel as I was reading through your notes, that, one by one, as more and more people became enmeshed in this, that they just started to flee. There had been quite a loyal club of people working together toward common goals, and they began to break loose, one after another. The grasp on reality started to give way to people trying to make up stories so they could get out of it.

HRH: Yep.

RHG: It became very complicated. Just the....

HRH: Yeah. It really did. Then you had, who do you believe? Between them. Because you had conflicting stories. You had the same guy giving conflicting stories, in the case of Magruder, and I think, some of the others. So, which Magruder story do you believe?

RHG: Well, just a closing thought, if I could.

HRH: Yeah.

RHG: Just based on the way you started our session on Watergate here. It was the idea of containment, which is one I hadn't thought of before. As a reason for a lot of the early steps that you took, just after the break-in occurred. The thought is, that you had decided on a strategy--a logical, reasonable, and even moral

strategy, before you had discovered the facts. And you never did discover the facts, just as you're saying. But the facts had to be of a certain kind, to allow you to pursue this strategy that you pursued. If they were not of that kind, then the containment was invalid.

HRH: Why?

RHG: Because....

HRH: Give me an example. In what way would containment have been invalid?

RHG: It was possible, at that time--I have the impression you decided on the containment, really, as an immediate response to the....

HRH: I don't think it even was a conscious decision.

RHG: Um hmm.

HRH: I think it was just we moved on the basis of containment.

RHG: Right, right.

HRH: Analyzing it afterwards, I've put the containment label on it as a description of what we were doing.

RHG: But more people might have been involved than you knew, at that time.

HRH: But the containment thing still applied. You still contain it to whoever was involved. I knew....

RHG: Right. But you assumed it wasn't in the White House.

HRH: I hoped it wasn't in the White House. I assumed it wasn't until.... You're right. I assumed it wasn't, until proven otherwise.

RHG: But I think there is something in the containment idea which presumes that it goes up to Liddy, it goes up to Hunt, maybe it

goes up in the Committee. But there's an assumption in there, that, I think, is behind some of the actions that you took, that it doesn't spill over into the White House.

HRH: There is that assumption, and that assumption was questioned frequently, both by the President, and by me. Asking Dean, "Does anything lead to the White House? Is there anybody at the White House involved?" I was told by John [Ehrlichman], who was told by Dean, and it worked both ways, that there wasn't.

Then, later, there were things that appeared to tie some things--or tried to tie it--but that's in the Magruder desperation period, and I wrote a lot of that off to Magruder's desperation and confusion, because they were conflicting. The things about, that the bugging results had been sent to me. I knew they hadn't, intentionally, at least, or to my knowledge, consciously, been sent to me. I didn't know if papers had been in my office, or something. I didn't know if Strachan had gotten the papers, or not. Strachan, I think, denies that he got the papers. I can't remember, whether he.... I think, no, I think he admits...

RHG: I can't remember.

HRH: ...that he got something from it, but didn't know what it was. But denies that he ever gave it to me. Then Magruder backs off and says, "Well, I assumed--I know everything Strachan got went to Haldeman." Well, that's a stupid assumption. Obviously, everything Strachan got didn't go to Haldeman, in all kinds of areas. That's what you had staff people for. But, looking at it from hindsight, dealing with your point that the containment

thing could get to be a problem. The assumption was that it did not go to the White House. All the knowledge that I had was that it did not go to the White House. Certainly in those early stages.

Later, there were some intimations that maybe it went to the White House in some ways. There were some possible links to the White House, because of Hunt's link to Colson, which raised some question. But there was never any allegation through that, by anybody, or any indication or evidence, that Colson had had anything to do with Hunt's actions after he went over to the Committee, and was working under Magruder's direction, or Liddy's direction, or whatever it was.

So, you're right that had there been a valid.... Had somebody at the White House--had Bud Krogh, or Chuck Colson, or anybody else--or the President, for that matter, stepped forth and said, "Now wait, this does come to the White House. I told them to bug the National...." If the President had said, "I told them to bug the National Committee," then I would have had a whole different problem. How I would have dealt with it, I can't tell you, now. It's so hypothetical, and so much has happened between now and then, there's no way I could put myself back in that point in time, and tell you how I would have dealt with that situation. But, that would have put a whole different light on it. Or, if Chuck Colson had come in to me and said, "Bob, we've got a real problem, because I sent them over to the Committee, and told them to bug the phone. Then, we couldn't legitimately keep it out of the White House. Then, the decision would have

had to be made, how do we handle this. I still think it would have fit within the rubric of containment. I think my view would have been, "Chuck, that's too bad. If it comes here, there's nothing we can do to stop it. If it comes to you, there's nothing we can do to stop it. If in fact that's what happens."

RHG: Of course, it never got to the point where you knew that someone in the White House was involved.

HRH: Never did.

RHG: So, I'm just trying to see this as a logical thing, and what happened to it. I think that you made this decision very early, to follow this tactic, and it was maintained until everything came to pieces. Before you got all the facts, and before all the possibilities were explored, so when it reached a pass--as it finally did in the beginning of March and April, and then continuing on through the Ervin [Committee] hearings and so on. Where things had reached this point where everybody was going to be examining what you did, including a great many people who were not friends of yours, and not friends of the administration's. There was just enough link between the White House and what had happened, that they could read the logical construction...

HRH: Right.

RHG: ...as being a cover-up from beginning to end. And then....

HRH: Right. Plus, that's what they wanted to believe. You've got to figure...

RHG: Yeah.

HRH: ...you start with the hypothesis and use everything to prove it.

RHG: You start with that supposition. But then, there was just enough

of a problem between adopting the strategy at the beginning, and finding out the facts later, that they could do this.

HRH: Yeah.

RHG: Then, they start looking at what information they could find, and frankly, reading this. Without the understanding that I think I have gained over the last few days, about how the White House thinks, as a whole. Particularly out of the sessions yesterday on public relations. And then misread everything.

HRH: Right. And it's very easy to do. As we saw yesterday in looking at some of the public relations stuff, it's easy to read that. It had nothing to do with Watergate or legalities or anything else. I think it's consistent all the way through there, that there are those things. That's what I tried to say at the Senate Committee, and in the trial and in the Grand Jury, but you can't go through the depth that we've gone through in these couple days, and that only skims the surface.

RHG: Yeah.

HRH: Other people can't put themselves into this same position and imagine, or recreate in their own minds, what really was happening at that time, and what people were thinking. It's hard for me to go back, and do it now, even though I lived through it. Because so much as happened since. Everything that happens after an event, colors your view of that event, in retrospect.

RHG: I suspect that very few people have had lives of such a kind that it's easy, or even possible, for them to enter into the frames of mind that you were in when you were making key decisions regarding Watergate, and even many of the other decisions in the

White House.

HRH: I think that's right. The biggest problem people had was accepting that this was an insignificant thing. Even today, fifteen years after it's all past, it's hard to believe that what became so monumental as Watergate, could have been so incidental as I claim it was, at the time it was happening.

RHG: Um hmm.

HRH: I recognize that. At the time, during the investigations and everything, I recognized that we were up against an impossible obstacle. There was no way, when this was the total focus--eight column banner headlines every night in every paper in the world, practically--there's no way you can say to anybody, with any degree of credibility at all, "This just wasn't important." Because it had become so important that you couldn't imagine that it ever had not been.

RHG: Well, this is your autobiography, and I'm pleased to put this on the record, and just put it there for researchers to see in [the] future.

HRH: Well, we put it in, and let them see what they come up with. I have the feeling that, like this book that I've alluded to a couple of times.... There are, still, a lot of unanswered questions, in my mind. I have the feeling that some of those answers, some people will evolve, over time. I would hope that, over time, other people that know more than I do about some of these things, will decide to either leave to us when they go, or tell us while they're still here, what they know. Because there's a lot that I don't know that I would sure--in a way, I'd

be interested in knowing. I'm not a Watergate buff anymore. I really don't have any great, overriding interest. If somebody untangled the whole thing, I would find it very fascinating.

RHG: Yes, and the importance is, of course, that the more information that's known--I should say, new information--reshapes all the old information.

HRH: Absolutely. Then you go back and re-look at everything in a totally different light. And I have the conviction that some new things that would come out would change the light in which we look at a lot of this. And would answer some of the things that you just sit here now, that are unanswerable. You just can't--you don't know.

RHG: Thank you, Mr. Haldeman.

HRH: OK.

[End of Interview]