

**Timothy Naftali**

Good morning. My name is Tim Naftali, the director of the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum. We're here on April 2, 2007, to interview Dwight Chapin for the Nixon Oral History Project. We're at the Varick Street Northeast Regional National Archives Facility. I'm with my colleague Paul Musgrave. Mr. Chapin, thank you for joining us today.

**Dwight Chapin**

Thank you, it's great to be here.

**Timothy Naftali**

Do you want to turn the boom?

**Paul Musgrave**

Yes, I'm good. It's good right there.

**Timothy Naftali**

Great.

**Paul Musgrave**

Great. Are we still rolling?

**Paul Musgrave**

[unintelligible] that mic [unintelligible] still have the shot. Well, we see the lav very little.

**Timothy Naftali**

Let's start with how you got interested in Presidential politics.

**Dwight Chapin**

In 1960 I needed a summer job, and, through some friends, I ended up working for CBS at the Democratic National Convention, which was being held in Los Angeles. And my job was to take the copy off of the teletype machine and to sneak it into a room, and in that room was Edward R. Murrow, Walter Cronkite, Douglas Edwards, and Charles Collingwood. These were all our ancient media figures in the news world, but they were doing the broadcast. And it was there at the arena in Los Angeles. And I just fell in love with everything that was going on; it was so exciting. I was seeing it from a news point of view, but, I mean, it just had all of this, I don't know, energy to it and the sense of something happening. And that was how I really got first tweaked into the process. And from there

-- then when I went to USC, I had got invited to an event where Bob Finch was speaking. And Bob Finch had been Nixon's campaign manager in 1960. And I listened to Bob, and I got excited about Richard Nixon, and then one thing led to another, and I got from there into the gubernatorial campaign in 1962, when he ran against Pat Brown for the governorship of California. He lost. It was -- at the time I was 21 years old and absolutely devastated that somebody could lose. I thought -- I was so blinded I thought there was no way that Nixon could possibly get defeated. And he never even had a chance, I came to find out later. But that was an exciting period, and being exposed to this former vice President was very intriguing to me in terms of its -- again, added to this political interest that I had.

And I was also, I should mention, there for the last press conference, when he came down and said, "You won't have Dick Nixon to kick around anymore." So I had all that going on in my head. And Bob Haldeman invited me to join J. Walter Thompson. Bob had been Nixon's campaign manager in '62, and he started alluding to the fact that Nixon was going to run for President again. And so this whole Presidential thing just kind of started perking off of the two events, the Democratic convention where I worked and then that gubernatorial campaign.

### Timothy Naftali

I want to go back to USC for a moment, because your USC buddies would play an important role later on. Tell us how you met Ron Ziegler.

### Dwight Chapin

I met Ron Ziegler the same day that I met Tim Elbourne and Sandy Quinn, and it was a Sigma Chi rush party. And the person that was in charge of the rush party said to the three fraternity brothers -- they were already in the fraternity -- they said, "This young man over here is interested in politics." So Ziegler, Quinn, and Elbourne walked over and kind of started talking to me about politics. In fact, they're the ones that mentioned the talk that Bob Finch was going to be giving. So that's where I met Ron Ziegler for the first time. Ron was two years ahead of me in school, and he and Nancy were already married, so I didn't have much contact with him right at the outset. But when the gubernatorial campaign came along, he worked with Sandy, and Ron and I got to know each other pretty well at that point. And then Ron, after the campaign, went to work for Bob Haldeman at J. Walter Thompson, and so did I, so that's when we really kind of bonded.

### Timothy Naftali

Did you do any student politics when you were at USC?

### Dwight Chapin

I did. We had two political parties, and I ended up running one of the political parties and managing some campaigns there on campus. So, yes, I was involved.

### Timothy Naftali

Tell us a little about the campus in that era. Was it --

**Dwight Chapin**

It was -- the campus in that era -- I mean, this is pre-, really, drug problems, pre-Vietnam War demonstration type problems. It was very mild compared to what's been experienced since. We had the larger fraternities, of which the one that I was in would fall into that category, and we basically opposed the smaller fraternities and the independents that were part of the campus mixture. And it was kind of in one sense very rinky-dink, in another sense fun and challenging, and made some very good friends and enjoyed it.

**Timothy Naftali**

Let's fast forward to 1962 to the gubernatorial campaign. What role were you playing in the campaign? You were an advance man?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, I was what was called a field man, and I was in charge of Santa Barbara County, Ventura County, and the San Fernando Valley. And my job -- at that time, walking precincts and organization was much more important than it is currently, although I think it's starting to come back into vogue. But my job was to get local neighborhood headquarters established, as many of them as we could get. So I ran around the three geographic areas that I mentioned organizing volunteers and making sure that we had little -- built structures within all the communities.

**Timothy Naftali**

Was there a good feeling in the campaign? Was there a sense that you could win this, or did you feel that Brown was going to pull it out?

**Dwight Chapin**

I was so young and so naïve, and I felt that we could win. I've come to find, you know, in talking to some of the more senior people over the years, that it was really a long shot. And I think, you know, the primary example that I -- what Nixon said in one of his talks, I think it was towards, right before the election itself, that he was running for the Presidency of California or something. I mean, it's just, it was not something that probably should have even been attempted, but the name of the game was to try to keep him alive politically. And that seemed to be the only vehicle that they had open to him because the Senate seats were closed out and so forth, so -- I don't know. I don't believe I knew that it was inevitable that we were going to get defeated.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did you work with Haldeman on this campaign?

**Dwight Chapin**

The day that I went in and interviewed for the job, Herb Kalmbach interviewed me, and then he took me down the hall and I met this young, 34-year-old, crew cut guy by the name of Bob Haldeman. And Bob Haldeman changed my life.

**Timothy Naftali**

Can you tell us more?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, we became incredibly good friends. Once the campaign was over, he hired me to go to work at J. Walter Thompson. I worked in the media department there and then became Bob's assistant. Bob, when I was offered a job by ABC television, Bob intervened. He said, "Let me have the last word before you make a decision." And he came up with the idea of moving me to New York. And he used as part of the carrot on that that I could interface with Rose Mary Woods, who had moved here with Vice President Nixon, and that Nixon was most likely going to be running for the Presidency, and that I could become involved. So --

**Timothy Naftali**

Right off the bat, so that was part of it? And understanding this was 1962.

**Dwight Chapin**

No, this would have been in 1965. There's -- the Goldwater convention of 1964 was important for me in the sense that Nixon went to that convention in San Francisco, and he held an event, kind of a hand-shaker where they invited all of the delegates from 1960 to drop by and meet Pat and Dick Nixon, so that they could thank them. And my job was kind of to be Mr. Nixon's aide at that event. And I didn't know at the time, but they were kind of testing me out and seeing how I did. And then that was part of what led to my finally ending up being Mr. Nixon's personal aide in the 1968 campaign, but that all predated my moving to New York.

**Timothy Naftali**

Let's talk a bit -- one last question about 1962. If you would, describe for us the setting of the last press conference, where you were and how you interpreted it.

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, the last press conference came early in the morning, the morning after the election, and it was in a ballroom at the Beverly Hilton Hotel. And my friend Mike Guen [phonetic sp], who was from USC, who later went to work for Henry Kissinger, is now at the State Department, Mike and I were standing right near the stage. We had been told that Mr. Nixon was going to come down and make a statement. And he entered the room, he was with Herb Klein, Bob Haldeman, and Ron Ziegler, I don't know who else was with him. He was really down. He'd been up all night. He was devastated. And he said exactly what was on his mind, and that was, you know, he was out of politics forever, kind of, and that the media would not have Dick Nixon to kick around anymore. I remember it as being just a very -- totally sad occasion. I mean, it was just so depressing, and I remember getting in my car and driving all around Beverly Hills and that area that morning, just bawling. I was just -- I was a young man -- I was just crushed. And of course I couldn't begin to feel the pain that Nixon must have felt personally, especially coming after the Vice Presidency, or after the Presidency loss of '60.

**Timothy Naftali**

But when was it that Haldeman told you that Nixon was going to get back into [unintelligible]?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, this is interesting to me. It would be very interesting to follow up with Flanigan, because Bob started coming to meetings in New York that would be held -- they would be timed so that when he came east to meet with the management of J. Walter Thompson, he could also attend some of these organizational type meetings. They really took off after the Kennedy assassination, because the question was whether or not Nixon should go for the nomination in '64 or wait 'til '68. And so there was a lot of -- this thing was game planned nine ways to Sunday, I mean, just constantly. And Bob would share this information with me, so, I mean, I knew that there was a very solid chance that Mr. Nixon was going to make a run at it. The obstacles were George Romney of Michigan and Nelson Rockefeller of New York, but Nixon, you know, he had a strategy and he -- tanned, rested, and ready, you know.

**Paul Musgrave**

Len Garment suggests in his book that Nixon moved to New York -- the conventional line has always been because he had been defeated and that he was just getting out. Did you ever get the sense that he had moved to New York intentionally in order just to start fresh? Did you have any sense of the calculations that went into that move?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, I think Nixon felt that the West Coast was like a cow town and that the big league was in New York, and he was big league, and he wasn't going to be in California. And the humiliation of that defeat out there, and he just had such negative feelings, and I think that's really at the core of it. And he, from a business point of view, wanted to stay in touch, and everybody traveled through New York. You know, I'm talking about people worldwide would be coming through, and L.A. is not necessarily one of the stopping points. So, in order to really keep his contacts and to maximize his earning power -- he had never made a lot of money. So the New York strategy makes sense outside of the political -- I'm not saying that wasn't back in his mind some place, you know, but I think the business reasons were predominant.

**Timothy Naftali**

What did you do between 1962 and '65?

**Dwight Chapin**

Between 1962 and 1965, I graduated from the University of Southern California, which was my job number one to get done. I got married, and I went to work full time for J. Walter Thompson. And then -- it was J. Walter Thompson, the company, that moved me to New York, and I worked here in New York as an account representative. And then in the evenings and on weekends, I would go down to 20 Broad Street to the Nixon law firm, and I would answer mail from various supporters and friends

and people that would write in to former Vice President Nixon. And I'd worked there often with Mrs. Nixon, who'd be there answering mail also. So the minute I got to New York, I established my contact with Rose Mary Woods, and I got right back into the loop.

**Timothy Naftali**

Tell us about the loop. Who else was in the loop then? Who was coming to Broad Street on the weekends to work on mail?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, I mean, a friend of mine from J. Walter Thompson that I got involved with, a young man named Ken Cole. And Ken, who ended up being one of my lifelong friends, would come down and answer mail. There were friends of theirs from New York -- I'm at a loss for some of the names, but some ladies and so forth that would come in. Rose Mary Woods would organize, you know, the mail that we were supposed to be answering. But I really -- I'm sorry, Tim, I don't recall exactly who --

**Timothy Naftali**

Did you have a sense that it was a permanent campaign?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, it grew, I mean -- a permanent campaign -- I had a sense that -- now we're talking '65. We'd gone through the Goldwater thing in California, so it's heating up. I mean, Bob Haldeman was making his trips to the East Coast. I'd always have dinner with him. We'd spend a few hours together. He would tell me about the meetings that he had been to, Flanigan, Maury Stans, you know, this group. So it was coming together. Nixon was plotting his strategy, of which I'm sure you know this, the key element in it that made this one work was John Mitchell.

**Timothy Naftali**

Tell us about -- when does he come on the scene?

**Dwight Chapin**

John comes on the scene -- for me, I met him in March of 1967, when I joined the law firm. I'm not a lawyer, but I went to work at the law firm as Nixon's personal aide. And there was Nixon's office, and right adjacent to it was John Mitchell's office, and I met John the day I started. And he was a bond lawyer, as you undoubtedly know, and he represented or put together packages of selling bonds for municipalities. Many of these municipalities were in very key primary states, and that network became incredibly important in the 1968 primary season.

**Timothy Naftali**

Before we get to '67, I want to talk about the campaign of '66. What role did you play in '66?

**Dwight Chapin**

In 1966 I was an advance man. I went to advance man school. I got sent out with one or two people and then I was put on my own, and I went out and I organized events in localities that Mr. Nixon was going to visit. 1966 is very important in understanding Nixon's reemergence because it was an off-year congressional campaign period where the spotlight was really on Mr. Nixon. He took full advantage of it. He earned a lot of chits with the various congressional candidates. It was a very successful time for Republicans. Johnson was having his problems. Johnson got so mad that, at one point, he called Nixon a chronic campaigner, and it happened to be that the next stop after Johnson had done that at a press conference was Waterville, Maine, and that was where I had advanced an event, and I remember Mike Wallace flying in by jet for "60 Minutes." I mean, it was a big deal at the time, but it really gave me, you know, an exposure to the campaigning thing on a whole different level than I'd had in 1962.

**Timothy Naftali**

That was the time, wasn't it, that Nixon wanted -- Ann Whitman to get in touch with Dwight Eisenhower to put pressure on the Republican National Committee to get him back on national television? Was that?

**Dwight Chapin**

I believe so. Ray Bliss was the Republican chairman, and the idea was to get them to use him and give him a half hour, and I believe they did. I mean, if there was an attempt for pressure, and my sense of it is that there was, it worked, particularly after Johnson made the charge.

**Timothy Naftali**

Advance school -- what's advance man school? Who trained you?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, you're trained by -- in 1966, I believe it was run by John Whitaker. In fact, I'm sure it was run by John Whitaker. And then in 1968 it was run by John Ehrlichman. And Nixon had a very sophisticated advance operation. It's very, it's interesting, because it tells you the degree to which he wanted things controlled, and there was a big manual that had been put together over the years. In fact, it's interesting that this manual was first written off of a model that somebody had received of Billy Graham's model, and the Nixon people, I believe, got that in 1960. But by -- there was an advance man's manual in '62 and then there was this one in '66 and then even a more elaborate one in '68, and it would define exactly how things were to work. For example, it would take a motorcade and lay out exactly where everyone was to be in a motorcade. It had rules of thumb. For example, I served in the capacity as the personal aide. The advance man would be told to come to me with any news affecting the event that was to be forthcoming, and then I would tell Mr. Nixon, because I had been trained on how to tell Mr. Nixon and how to present this to him. And the example we always used with advance men was, you know, we're getting ready to go to a hall, let's say, and you don't come banging through the door and say, "We have a major problem at the hall, and we're not sure whether anybody's going to show up there," because of the effect that that would have on the candidate. So we set up a whole disciplinary system of how everything would work, from, you know, what should be in the suite, what should be

done in terms of timing. I mean, it was endless. And it was adhered to or the advance man would be fired. And we fired 'em.

**Timothy Naftali**

Was this different from what other candidates had at that time?

**Dwight Chapin**

I think so. I think ours was much more elaborate. Kennedy's -- I am told that Kennedy's really was not as good as Nixon's, and that's one of the reasons that Kennedy -- they were historically behind time, things were screwed up. I mean, the candidate did fine, but the procedures, the process. With the Nixon campaign, the procedures and the process were like [snaps] a Swiss Army watch, or the trains. You know, they ran right on time.

**Timothy Naftali**

How did this system reflect the candidate's personality and needs?

**Dwight Chapin**

I think it really reflected a lot about Richard Nixon, which is the controlled environment. I mean, one of the key things about President Nixon is this Quaker heritage and the peace at the center that he was all about. And that has to do -- from an advance man's point of view, that has to do with everything working exactly like it is supposed to work. There are no surprises. There are no, you know, offbeat type things. We could inject spontaneity any time we wanted to by moving it off and having that if that's what he wanted in a given instance. But for the most part, everything worked exactly like it was supposed to, and the pluses of that for the candidate are that he can plan right around it. He knows that when we say that the motorcade is leaving at 8:00 in the morning, we're going to go at 8:00 in the morning, that we're going to get to the television station at 9:30, and that we're going to have X number of minutes there, and he would set that. I mean, he was phenomenal in terms of a sense of timing without ever looking at a watch. I mean, he just would, I guess, you know, visualize what his next day was going to be like. He would have a schedule, he would read through it, and our job was to deliver that day exactly as was on the paper. Now there were always exceptions. I mean, things happen in campaigns. Some news breaks or whatever it happens to be. But for the most part we gave him that structure to work within.

**Timothy Naftali**

What role did the modern techniques of advertising play in shaping these campaigns? You go to J. Walter Thompson. It's at the cutting edge of advertising in that era. How did that experience shape the way you ultimately, and other veterans of J. Walter Thompson, influence the campaign?

**Dwight Chapin**

For me, the disciplines of the media and how to utilize it, from both advertising, or more important, in a public relations sense, because you're getting free media when you're in office. And I was very involved in that in the White House years. I really was not involved in that in the campaign years, '66,

'68. My advertising background and so forth was not utilized. Roger Ailes, Garment, Shakespeare, those folks had the impact there, and to a degree Haldeman.

**Paul Musgrave**

Stop --

**Dwight Chapin**

Can I take a drink?

**Paul Musgrave**

Yeah.

[in audio]

**Timothy Naftali**

Let's talk about the 1968 campaign.

**Dwight Chapin**

Right.

**Timothy Naftali**

I've heard some people say that if it had lasted a couple of days longer, President -- Richard Nixon might have lost.

**Dwight Chapin**

Right.

**Timothy Naftali**

Talk about that campaign, what you remember, anecdotes from that campaign, please.

**Dwight Chapin**

Wow, it helps to get prompted. It was a grueling campaign, and he did spectacular. I mean, he took good care of himself. My job was to help him take care of himself. He worked incredibly hard. I mean, people have no idea what these men, and now a woman, what these people go through. I was in my 20s and, you know, he would keep going, and I was worn out. I mean -- and he was making the speeches and doing the work, so I have tremendous respect for what he did. The campaign started basically in 1967, from my point of view, with the two of us. We would go fly commercial and go out

and do little fundraisers, and he'd be interviewing people to be state chairman or whatever, and it was just the two of us. And he would have his briefcase on his lap and he would be, you know, working on whatever he was, and when the stewardess would come with dinner or something, we'd have a chance to talk for a few minutes. But, you know, I was an aide. I wasn't a friend, I wasn't a traveling companion, I was an aide, and I needed to understand that that was my role. It had been banged into me by Bob Haldeman, my friend, and I knew my place. That said, I got exposed to a great deal of very interesting things, and I got to watch him as he worked this campaign. And I think the thing that impressed me -- one of the things that impressed me most about him was that, I don't care if he was going to go address 30,000 people in an arena or he was going to the smallest radio station in Rhinelander, Wisconsin, he would give it the same time and attention. He'd be in the back of the car, he'd be working on his talking points or his notes, he would commit it to memory or, you know, he would get so comfortable with it that he could just put the yellow pad into his briefcase, put it aside, walk in, and make the most of any occasion. And I've taken that away, just in terms of my life, that he -- nothing -- if it was worth doing, it was worth doing right, and that's how he looked at it.

### Timothy Naftali

What kind of staff did he have to prep him for these events? They weren't flying with him, I know, but back in New York, did --

### Dwight Chapin

Well, he had Ray Price. Well, he had, first of all, first and foremost, Rose Woods. And then second would be Pat Buchanan, who would be working on the topic of the day or the news report or the -- Pat was always in there on the analysis of what's happening, how is this thing shifting. And then it kind of worked itself out. Ray Price would be working on a speech or a talk, so he would be giving it more substance in terms of the overall empathy of the speech and, you know, how is it going to be viewed in the whole part. Whereas Pat would be just in there chopping away on what's going to make news and so forth. And of course then I was responsible for just the flow of something, to make sure that his part of the trip went right and so forth. This was at the outset. Then we started adding these people, you know, until where we get a tour director, and we've got people traveling on the plane like Richard Moore. Richard Moore was a businessperson from Los Angeles who was a lawyer, who understood media, and whose job was to insert into the President's remarks like, local color, things he would pick up from talking to the advance man or phoning ahead. And we had somebody like Bryce Harlow, who would be along, who was a former lobbyist who ended up being on the Nixon staff when he went into the White House, and Bryce would bring along kind of a political understanding. He would switch off with Bob Finch, who would be on. Depending upon what part of the country we were in, we might have somebody that was a good politician down in the South who would come onto the plane when we're going into that region. Whereas, when we go up into the northwest, we have somebody that's got a different political bent. And these people would rotate through the plane depending upon where we were going, what the issues were that we were dealing with. Rarely would John Mitchell travel with us. He was the campaign manager. He would stay stationed in Manhattan. Haldeman was kind of the chief of staff on the trip itself, Ehrlichman tour director. And then we had secretaries. Rose Mary Woods traveled with us. Shelley Scarney, who's now married to Pat Buchanan, wonderful lady, traveled with us. And then we had baggage people, we had, finally -- eventually we had two Boeing jets, one named the Tricia and one the Julie, after the daughters. And the media were all on one of the planes, and we had the press contingency taking care of them.

**Timothy Naftali**

Would the President, the Vice President at that point, would he interrogate the local politician to get information? How did this -- what was this information conveyed, you know, when you got the Southern politician on the plane? Was there a little seminar? Would Nixon and the politician sit together and chat? How did this work?

**Dwight Chapin**

For the most part, we tried to keep the politicians off the plane. What I meant earlier was that we would have our person who was in charge of that region, like a Dick Kleindienst, who might be overseeing, let's say, the Southwest, Arizona, New Mexico, and so forth, or Clarke Reed, another Nixon operative, if you will, who was working the South. We did not like bringing politicians onto the plane, because what we tried to do, again this comes back to the advance man manual, but it really comes back to how we organize things, and that was to give him as much personal, private time as possible to take, because, as I mentioned earlier, the grueling nature of these campaigns you take -- and I think the lesson out of 1960, in fact, was, you know, let's really limit what we do with the candidate. Back in 1968, the media was entirely different than it is now. You cannot look at this 24-hour cycle we have now and be thinking in 1968. It was a whole different ball game. We would have an a.m. news cycle and a p.m. news cycle. We had to make news for a.m. and for p.m., and we would play that and not try to compete with event after event after event just for the sake of having events. So there was a whole mentality here of limiting the people on the airplane, the people that came to hotel suites, you know, all the people that want to come, you know, and shake hands and tell him exactly what he should be doing. We tried to minimize that. And, therefore, we would take along the Bryce Harlows or the Bob Finches or the Pat Hillings and a lot of these other people that would travel with us. When they would get to the local hotel, they would grab the politicians and they would say, "Dick's off. He's got to work on his speech. He wanted me to meet with you and ask you X, Y, and Z." So we were very good at taking all of the local types that wanted to be schmoozing with Nixon, moving them off and setting up a place where they could, you know, where they could talk.

**Timothy Naftali**

Wasn't there some concern though that this made the candidate seem aloof?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, I think you got to look at the trade-off there. I mean, my recall on this is that, yeah, we would get hammered with that periodically, just like, you know, the Berlin Wall syndrome we can talk about in the White House. But this is how he wanted it. The Berlin Wall wasn't created by Haldeman and Ehrlichman. The Berlin Wall -- the way the place worked was determined by Nixon, and the way the campaign worked was determined by Nixon. Haldeman had written a memo, it's a rather famous memo, on how the campaign should work, and a lot of the stuff is in that memorandum. But, I mean, the lessons from 1960 were you cannot scatter your shots and be everywhere. You can't fly out to Hawaii and go up to Alaska and be all over hell's half acre. You've got to deliver the states that need to be delivered and keep focus, and the name of the game was to keep focus.

**Timothy Naftali**

Was there a sense that the campaign -- in 1960, that President Nixon, or then Vice President Nixon, was interacting more with people, was more socializing during that off-year election, 1966, than would be the case in '68, or was the case in '68?

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes, you have two different things. '66 is to go out and to earn chits, to do some stuff that you'd never want to do, and then that changed dramatically coming in through '67. You're going to do some of that in '67, but boy, once you're up to that New Hampshire starting gate and you're going through these primaries, it changes. You have to do a certain amount of it. What he much preferred to do, and it was an incredibly bright idea, and I'm not sure whose it was, one of the other men may remember, we did these hand-shakers. I don't know if you've heard about this. Well, this is incredible. He went up to announce in New Hampshire, and the advance people sent out something like 50,000 invitations. I mean, it's like everybody in New Hampshire had an invitation, and they came. And he and Mrs. Nixon stood there and shook hands for like five and a half, six hours. And then this happened in Wisconsin. And then it happened in Pennsylvania. And it happened in, you know, in California. I remember the Century Plaza Hotel in California. The line went from the main ballroom all the way out to the parking garages. I mean, and people came from hither and yon just to stand in line to shake hands with Dick and Pat Nixon. And I stood with them through most of those lines, and it was amazing. And the other -- and so he would trade that off to -- and the importance of that versus meeting with, you know, a group of politicians in a room. And we were, you know, we were using television incredibly effectively. I mean, we went with the man in arena thing. I mean, this thing was -- this campaign was fantastic. I mean, Humphrey's was good, but he had a lot of other problems to deal with and the war and Johnson and so forth. Our thing was a machine.

**Timothy Naftali**

Tell us about the man in the arena.

**Dwight Chapin**

The man-in-the-arena concept was brought to the group, I believe, by Roger Ailes, and Roger envisioned this. And he had Paul -- Bud Wilkinson, who was the football coach from Oklahoma. I mean, you guys may not even remember him, gray-haired. He had the most successful football team in America year after year. He was a national figure. It would be like Don Shula now or something. I mean, everybody knew who Bud Wilkinson was, and Bud was the emcee in this. So we brought in sports and this incredibly nice-looking man, who would handle questions in terms of the set-up of this, and then it would turn it over to Nixon. But if there was any lull, Bud would step in and Nixon would answer questions. And the man in the arena comes from the Teddy Roosevelt "Man in the Arena" quote, which is one of Nixon's favorites, and we wanted to play that. We also wanted to show that he was capable of getting, you know, there with no notes, no podium, nothing, just him and the people. And the television coverage of it was designed to maximize the shots of the crowd and these people. Now you see it on "Oprah," you see it everywhere, but this is the first time it had ever been done in a political environment.

**Timothy Naftali**

Through '68 -- let's talk about a few sort of very, very significant historical moments. Were you with Vice President Nixon when Martin Luther King was shot?

**Dwight Chapin**

I don't remember, but I think the answer is no, because I think Nixon was at his apartment in New York when Martin Luther King was shot, if my memory is serving me. But I sure remember everything that transpired immediately after Martin Luther King was shot. And I went to the funeral. I sat in the Ebenezer Baptist Church, and I was with Nixon the whole way through this, so I have a fairly good feel for this.

**Timothy Naftali**

Please -- Nixon did not call -- in 1960 John Kennedy earned a lot of praise for calling Martin Luther King, and Nixon did not, and he learned from that experience.

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, you -- Mr. Nixon had been very good friends with Martin Luther King, Sr., and they had endorsed Nixon, I believe, back when -- and Eisenhower. But let me go through my story here, okay.

**Timothy Naftali**

Okay.

**Dwight Chapin**

Because some of it you need to check with a couple of other people, specifically Garment, and, if you could get to him, you ought to interview Frank Shakespeare out in California. I mean, he's right down there in La Costa or something. Martin Luther King gets shot. The country is just in this turmoil over this. The debate gets started as to whether or not Nixon should go to the funeral.

**Paul Musgrave**

[unintelligible] we got a lot of outside noise. [unintelligible] biker gangs.

**Dwight Chapin**

Are you a biker?

**Paul Musgrave**

No, just --

**Timothy Naftali**

Okay, let's --

**Dwight Chapin**

Are we ready?

**Timothy Naftali**

Yes, we are.

**Dwight Chapin**

Okay, so here's what I remember. I remember this incredible tugging and pulling. Does he go to the funeral, does he not go to the funeral? Does he go to the funeral, does he not go to the funeral? Nixon's gut thing was, "I don't go to the funeral, because it's not credible. I mean, I don't -- yes, he's a national leader, but I don't like taking advantage of going to a funeral and being there when Martin Luther King and I were not good friends." Now, they had had this relationship before with the father but not with the son, is my understanding of this. So, this tug goes back, and this thing goes back and forth. Finally, there is a solution. And we have dispatched Nick Ruwe, who was one of our top people, down to Atlanta, and Nick is there prowling around, figuring out, waiting for instructions as to exactly what's going to happen. What we ended up doing was Nixon used Bob Abplanalp, who's one of his great friends, his airplane, and we flew -- it was myself and Mr. Nixon, flew to Atlanta. Nick Ruwe picked us up at the airport, and he had hired a guy, kind of a limousine driver man and paid him enough to -- said, "This can never be talked about," to the limousine driver. We got in the car, and we pull up in front of Martin Luther King Jr.'s home. We go in, and we go up onto the porch. It was a very modest home. And here were all of his children, and Mr. Nixon talked to each one of them and expressed his condolences. We then went down the back hallway and into a bedroom, and laying on the bed, propped up on pillows, was Mrs. Martin Luther King. The President went over and sat on the side of the bed -- by the way, he wasn't President -- the candidate went over and sat on the side of the bed, took her hand, and started talking to her. And I left the room, and I went back up with the kids. And I would say that Mr. Nixon was in there maybe five minutes. Then he came back out, talked to the kids a little bit more, we got into the car, and we drove over to Martin Luther King Sr.'s home, which was entirely different than Martin Luther King Jr.'s, much -- Martin Luther King Jr.'s home was very modest. The senior's home was a very beautiful home in this very lovely neighborhood of Atlanta, and we went in, and many of their friends were there. It was like a wake type feeling there, but more of a social occasion in the sense of people coming to express their grief and so forth. And I don't think they had any idea he was coming over there. And he went in, he found Dr. King Sr. and Mrs. King, expressed his condolences -- we were only there, I would say, 10 or 15 minutes -- got in the car, went back to the airport, got on the plane, and went to the Key Biscayne villas and hotel in Key Biscayne, Florida. Bebe Rebozo had met us at the airport, drove us over there. So, now it is, let's say, 7:30 at night, and I'm in my room -- I had actually a little villa kind of, oh, I'd say 30 yards from Nixon's. And I get this call and he said, "Dwight, can you come over?" So I go over and he's there with Bebe Rebozo, Jane Lucke, who was Bebe's girlfriend, and Nixon, the three of them are sitting on the couch. It was like a surreal thing, I mean, watching some television show. And he says to me, he said, "Dwight, how's our trip to Atlanta playing?" And I said, "Sir, I have no idea. I'll go check." So I go back and I call John Whitaker, who had been the point man on putting all of this together with Nick,

and I said, "John, I think we've got a problem. Mr. Nixon is asking how it's playing." John says, "What the hell do you mean?" He said, "This whole thing was to be off the record. Nobody was to know." And I said, "Well, he's asking me about, you know, how it's playing. I think he thought it was going to leak or something." So, he said, "You'd better go check him and see what he wants to do." So I go back and I said, "Mr. Nixon, nothing's happened because you had wanted to have this confidential and nobody was to know." And he got furious, he said, "Damn it," he says, "I'm going to have to go back there and go to that funeral if this is not -- the whole purpose in our doing it was so that we would do it privately, we were not taking advantage of it, and we would not have to go to the funeral." So I went back, called Whitaker, Whitaker called Nick Ruwe, Nick Ruwe started calling radio stations saying, "I think I saw President Nixon here," -- or, "former Vice President Nixon here visiting the King family." The radio stations called the King home, and the King family wouldn't confirm it because they had been told that it was to be confidential, that Mr. Nixon didn't want anybody to know, and they wouldn't confirm it. So, I mean, this thing was a disaster. So, the story ends very nicely in the sense that Mr. Nixon went back for the funeral. We stayed at the Hyatt Hotel, Peach Tree Street, and it was like an all-night wake there; I mean, it was just unbelievable. There was not one bottle of liquor left in the hotel, is what we were told by the manager of the hotel. The next morning, Nixon went over to the Ebenezer Baptist Church. We had the same limo driver that we had had on the first trip. We pull up to the church, as close as we can get. And it probably was close to, oh, I want to say 50 yards from the church, because it was just this mass of humanity. I mean, it was just this massive crowd of people. And Mr. Nixon -- the car pulled up, the door opened, he got out, and these citizens of Atlanta saw who it was, and they kind of backed off and they made a little path, and you heard it start, this clapping, and it just kept building. And all of a sudden it got louder and louder, and it just like -- it parted and he walked right on up and into the church. It was one of the most memorable things of the whole 1968 thing, in my mind. I mean, it was just unbelievable. Mr. Nixon got into the church, he was taken to a seat, which is a whole other story, because it turned out that the guy that took him to his seat and took Jackie Kennedy to hers and other VIPs to their seat, that he was a mental patient type person. Nobody knows how he got in there, but that story was written about a few weeks later. They had the services and then after the services, we all go down into the basement. And here is Mr. Nixon standing there with Eugene McCarthy and Wilt Chamberlain and all these people, I mean, from the service. And, of course, you got to keep in mind that he was going to do this privately to begin with, and now we're doing the ceremony, and we're standing in the church, down in the basement of the church. Everything has ended, and we are supposed to get in the car and go, at which time Wilt Chamberlain or Eugene McCarthy or somebody says, "Are you going to march with us?" Because the caisson was going to take the casket and go down the streets of Atlanta to the burial plot, and everybody was going to march behind the caisson to go. And, so, I see this look on Mr. Nixon's face like, "March?" I mean -- and the next thing I knew, here we were out there on the streets of Atlanta marching down towards the -- towards where the burial was going to be. And Nick Ruwe, the advance man, who realized this was getting to be something where we needed to figure out how we were going to gracefully depart, had -- as we were going down the street, I saw him running, oh, it was about a half a block, a block ahead, and you could see that the road turned. There was a very sharp turn in the parade route. I call it a parade, but it was in the route. And so what Nick did is he went through there, he found a guy with a cab, a big cab, it was like a Cadillac or a big Oldsmobile or something with a little sign on the top, taxi. He gave the guy a couple of hundred bucks, and when we went down to make the turn, Nixon's -- I had told him that -- Nick had come back and said, "When we make the turn we're going to go straight ahead because there's a taxi waiting." So we're approaching the turn. Nixon turns to Wilt Chamberlain and says -- you know, Wilt is this big basketball player. I mean, he's a giant. He says, "I'm going to have to depart here, I've got to get to the airport." And Wilt says, "Can I get a ride with you to the airport?" And Nixon says, "Sure." So as we're turning we've got, at this point, Bebe Rebozo, who had flown

back up and gone for the funeral thing, although he had to wait outside the church. We have got Nixon, myself, and Wilt Chamberlain, and Nick Ruwe. There's five of us plus the cab driver. So we go through the crowd and here's the -- the doors of the cab fly open. This guy has no idea who's about ready to get into his cab. He cannot believe it. He's got Wilt Chamberlain, he's got this -- he looks in the mirror. You could tell -- then he turns around and he's trying to make sure that it's Richard Nixon. It was hilarious, and that's our Martin Luther King story. Kind of a long story but --

**Timothy Naftali**

It's great. No, it's a great story.

**Paul Musgrave**

Can we stop there?

**Dwight Chapin**

But it took all night.

**Timothy Naftali**

But it took all night to get that --

**Dwight Chapin**

And how close it was. In fact, it was -- well, I told the Chicago story.

**Paul Musgrave**

And then we went to Humphrey [unintelligible]

**Dwight Chapin**

Right.

**Timothy Naftali**

Let's talk about the transition a bit. To what extent do you remember Henry Kissinger in the transition? When did you first meet him?

**Dwight Chapin**

When he came to the Pierre Hotel. But I called him. He had no -- couldn't figure out who I was, which is not surprising, because I was nobody. I called and set up the appointment for him to come over and to meet Mr. Nixon, and he showed up at the suite that we had for the transition at the Pierre Hotel. And I took him in, and he and Mr. Nixon talked, and I have no idea what was said.

**Timothy Naftali**

Were you given a list of just people to call that --

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes, to arrange for interviews. There is a funny story, though, or a good story in terms of, one morning Haldeman came in and I was at my little desk that I had. I had a desk --

**Paul Musgrave**

Hold on one second.

**Male Speaker**

They have a very active [unintelligible]

**Male Speaker**

Sounded like a janitor with a garbage can.

**Timothy Naftali**

Oh, I thought it was also [unintelligible]

**Dwight Chapin**

So anyway, I had this little desk area right adjacent to the entrance into the suite where Mr. Nixon would meet with people and it was right there, about a block and a half down from his home there on Fifth Avenue. And so Haldeman comes out, comes in there, and I'm going through this notebook. He says, "What, what in the world is that?" I said, "Oh, some guys brought it this morning. It's the President's briefing on the -- on Vietnam and so forth, the same thing that President Johnson has." I said, "They were great guys, they just -- you know, they left it here with me." And Haldeman looks at this thing. At the top it says "Top Secret, President's Eyes Only," all this kind of stuff on it, and here I am going through this thing. Well, I caused a minor incident, because what had happened, what happened was, of course, who -- the powers to be at the CIA or whatever were trying to be, you know, graciously giving this to Nixon. Of course, they leave it with this young aide, who should no more have had his hands on it than the man in the moon. Nixon goes ballistic that I am seeing this. It's a perfect example of how sloppy things are being run in the Johnson White House. The President, President Johnson is contacted. He goes ballistic all because of this documentation that was brought, dropped off. I had no clearance. At that point I had never been -- didn't have any FBI clearance. And that was kind of one of the little incidents that started off the relationship with the CIA and us.

**Timothy Naftali**

Now, you get a job anyway. Despite this excitement, you get a job.

**Dwight Chapin**

Right.

**Timothy Naftali**

What was the discussion about? Was there any discussion with Haldeman on what kind of job you would get in the White House?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, no, I mean, I just -- you got to keep in mind I was 27 years old at that point, and we had just gone through this campaign, and I was just waiting to see what unfolded. I mean, I didn't know where they were going to utilize me. I was pretty sure I was going to be going to the White House and be part of the staff, but I had no idea what position I would have.

**Timothy Naftali**

Before we start the administration, I wanted to follow up on something you told us this morning. Way back in the Broad Street days, when you went to work on the mail, you said that Pat Nixon was working.

**Dwight Chapin**

Mm-hmm.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did you have occasion to talk to her?

**Dwight Chapin**

Oh, sure. Well, I was -- she used to make me sandwiches at the home because I had a little office in their residence, and Manolo and Fina were the couple that lived there and Mrs. Nixon. I mean, they are very, very gracious people and treated me like -- you know, as I explained earlier today, I mean, I was not a friend and not a colleague; I was an aide. But, you know, when I was in their home, I was treated very, very nice. Mrs. Nixon would say, you know, "Do you want a Coke? Do you want this?" I mean, just like -- you know, like a wife would do if some guest was in their home.

**Timothy Naftali**

And when -- and at Broad Street she was working with Rose?

**Dwight Chapin**

Yeah, she would come down. She had -- she would come into this room that we had. It wasn't on the same level as where Mr. Nixon's office was. It was a conference room down a couple of floors, and we would have stacks of mail that needed to be answered and a big conference table. And we would pick letters off of that. It was sorted out into certain groups, and we would draft responses. Some of the responses would be typed by Shelley, some would be typed by Rose, but we would help organize.

**Timothy Naftali**

What role did Mrs. Nixon play?

**Dwight Chapin**

Just helping with the mail. She was helping with the mail.

**Timothy Naftali**

So, helping with the responses?

**Dwight Chapin**

Yeah, sure.

**Timothy Naftali**

What was that -- I mean, do you -- I mean, it's a long time ago but do you recall any -- so she was answering some of them?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, I mean, I can't -- the specifics, no. She was just there working, just a normal woman there helping out.

**Timothy Naftali**

Okay, when did you first meet Julie and Tricia?

**Dwight Chapin**

Oh, wow, I believe in '62, probably at some event or something. I mean, it's hard to know but I think it goes way back to that time.

**Timothy Naftali**

All right, it's 1969, the inauguration has happened. You're appointments secretary. What -- tell us about a day with -- tell us about a typical day with Haldeman. What would you be doing with him? What meetings would he bring you to, generally speaking?

### Dwight Chapin

A typical day for me in the early part -- there was two distinct segments to this. The first one is when we first get there, and I am responsible for the scheduling and also for the President's daily activities. So that meant, you know, ushering people in and out of the office, making sure everything kept on the right timetable and so forth. Then, in later time, it would be after the Hurricane Camille that happened down south that he went to, right in that period, I moved down the hall, and I started taking on a more long-range planning function, and I got out of the daily management of the schedule. But in the early part, my day would be that Haldeman would pick us up around -- pick me up around 7:15. The car would get Bob, then it would get Larry Higby, Bob's aide, and then it would swing by my house, and then into the White House. We would have -- how we would all go to work. Bob would have his senior staff meeting. Sometimes I attended, sometimes I did not, it just depended upon what the subject was, whether they wanted to get into schedule stuff and so forth. If it was into policy and that type of thing, I didn't -- I was not attending. The other kinds of meetings that I was included in to really was based on need to know. I mean, if it was something that was going to involve the schedule or an operations thing, then I would be included into the meetings. The -- in the later time, I ran the, for lack of a better term, the game-planning type meetings we had. In that group we had Colson attending periodically. We had Safire there almost every time. Richard Moore, who I've mentioned, Pat Buchanan, Jerry Warren. I mean, Ziegler hardly ever came; Jerry Warren would come. And we would game plan out what was going to be happening, two different ways, the next week, next month, two months, and we had these rolling plans. And we -- they were very sophisticated. People in later years with Deaver and the Reagan folks, this got a lot more publicity and was saluted to a greater degree, but we really started doing a lot of that stuff that they got credit for later. We were really into it early on in the Nixon years, and we used it all the way through. The primary example being the trip to China, where we just executed everything brilliantly, I think. So what other kinds of meetings? I mean, it would depend upon what was going on and where I needed to be.

### Timothy Naftali

Let's talk about things that Haldeman talked to you about. You may not have been in the meetings, but you -- he seemed to confide in you. Let's talk about the story of Yeoman Radford and the Joint Chiefs of Staffs spying on the President.

### Dwight Chapin

Well, I just -- I remember the outrage on this, and the President and Haldeman -- the President talking with Haldeman in his cabin on the way to -- on Air Force One on the way to the Azores, where Nixon was meeting with Pompidou. And they had Mitchell on the phone. They were talking to the Attorney General about it. And then later, Haldeman confided in me and said that there had been this military spying on Nixon and that it was serious. That it involved this yeoman and an admiral and that Henry Kissinger's briefcase had been rifled and, you know, this was horrible. Other than that, I don't know -- I have researched it myself over time and I'm -- you know, I have grown to know that Admiral Moore was in it and so forth, but that's all. You know, when we are focusing just on the timeframe, that's all I knew.

**Timothy Naftali**

So Haldeman didn't say something to you about the -- why no one was going to be cashiered, no one was going to be --

**Dwight Chapin**

Oh, there was a reference to the fact that it would not be in the President's interest to proceed on this because it could reflect badly. You know, the fact that the military was, you know, spying on the President was not something that necessarily, you know, was an accolade to the President. Thank you.

**Timothy Naftali**

You participated in the discussions about Apollo 11.

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes.

**Timothy Naftali**

We'll ask Mr. Flanigan about it, but --

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes.

**Timothy Naftali**

Tell us what you recall.

**Dwight Chapin**

I recall meetings in Peter Flanigan's office up on the second floor of the West Wing with Frank Borman and various drafts of -- and Bill Safire, I think, was there -- and we solicited other ideas. There was a -- at the outset, I think, kind of a general request for what ideas that people had. But Frank Borman was really the one who, I think, helped hone in on this, and Safire wrote it, I believe. And the issues that -- the only issue I recall is, you know, what is appropriate, and not overstepping anything, not doing something that's, you know, leaving some -- you know, a bust of Richard Nixon or something that would be so obnoxious. You know what I mean. It's just we've got to keep it in -- into the right frame. And then I do recall, when you said it this morning, earlier today, I do recall that there was a contingency plan in case something didn't go right, and there were on all of the launches. Apollo 13, remember they're the guys that had the trouble, and when they -- when we knew that they were going to be able to get down safely, I guess they had already landed-- gone through the -- we had dispatched -- we had planes ready and we went out, sent in an advance team and then we went out and greeted them in Honolulu when they came back. In fact, both planes landed at the same time.

Diamondhead was in the background. This fellow I was telling you about, Tim Elbourne, staged all this. It was -- but that was the closest we ever came to a catastrophe in our administration.

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, what, what kind -- do you remember some of the discussions with President Nixon during the Apollo 13 crisis, about how to manage it? I mean, what to say? When to talk to the American people?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, Bob would have been -- Bob was interfacing -- Bob Haldeman was interfacing with the President on that. He would come out from his office, give me whatever notes that were necessary. Frank Paine (sic), I believe, was the head of NASA. I may have that name a little wrong, but we were in direct contact constantly with NASA, and we were trying to figure -- we had devised this ceremony that we were going to just put together very quickly in Honolulu, and we got the President to approve that, but it went through Haldeman. The way that this stuff worked, in terms of the daily thing -- if I had something that I -- like a scheduled concept or an idea or the way that something could work, let's say that our coordinating committee had put that together or had debated it and put it together. I would type it up, get it kind of framed out as exactly how it would work, usually in writing, and then I would give that to Haldeman. He would go over it with the President. I did not go in and go through that kind of stuff with the President. Bob had these long, lengthy meetings that I'm sure you are aware of, that went on -- they were interminable, drove him nuts sometimes. I mean, he just really -- they were very trying at times because they just went on and on and on. But he would go through that material, and then he would come back to me.

**Timothy Naftali**

So he would come back to you sometimes and say that meeting lasted too long?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, no, not that. He would come back to me with the answer to the schedule thing.

**Timothy Naftali**

But you would --

**Dwight Chapin**

There were many times the meetings went too long. I mean, it was an issue. It was an issue with Haldeman. I mean, he had tons of work to do and the President liked to sit and ruminate and contemplate and think of every option. I mean, it's one of -- really one of the -- people say, well, you know, he had all this time alone in the office and nobody could see him. I mean, he was working. This was his style. This is how the man functioned. And he would take something, and he would look at 900 ways, you know, and then make his decisions on what he was going to do. Bob, usually, was the one that had to sit in there through this whole process. You know, he would do his best at calling other people in. I mean, maybe it's George Shultz on some issues or it's Henry Kissinger or it's John Ehrlichman or whoever, rarely a cabinet officer.

**Timothy Naftali**

Why rarely a cabinet officer?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, I think this was a delegation type of White House. Nixon looked at his staff as the ones that interfaced. He had people in his cabinet that were politicians by background, and he didn't want to get into -- he wanted it staffed out. He wanted it -- the essence of things in these memorandums. I mentioned earlier today Ken Cole, who was fabulous at putting this stuff together. We had a staff secretariat system that drove everything. People were obligated to be accountable for putting down, in writing, what it is that they wanted to talk about and their recommendations and so forth so that it wasn't kind of a very sloppy process. It was a very highly organized means of working.

**Timothy Naftali**

The President spent a lot of time in the old Executive Office Building.

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes.

**Timothy Naftali**

Was it clear from the start that that study would be as important to the President as it became?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, no. First of all, it was the Vice President's when we first got there, isn't that correct?

**Timothy Naftali**

I forgot.

**Dwight Chapin**

I think. When we first got there, I believe that that's where the Vice President was. Now I think the Vice President is over in the West Wing, but back then. And Nixon -- I'm trying to remember whether it was like '70 or '60, yeah, it may be '69 or '70, late '69, '70 -- asked Agnew to move out of there, and he took that as his executive getaway office, and, I mean, he used it religiously. I mean, it was -- I think the Oval Office is kind of a fishbowl concept. I mean, really, you've got people sitting out there on the terrace, looking in the doors. You've got -- and I'm talking about Secret Service. You've got people wandering through the rose garden. You've got the traffic down the hall by the Roosevelt Room. You can go to the Executive Office Building and really have privacy. He had a shower there. He'd often have lunch there. Maybe somebody has mentioned this, but, you know, Nixon used to pride himself on he would work two days to everybody else's one day. He would get up early, and he would shower, get ready, come to work. Come noontime, he would have his cottage cheese and ketchup lunch, a very

healthy lunch. He would undress, take a nap over in the Executive Office Building, shower, shave, get cleaned up again, and be off to work. So I mean, he had this routine, and it's not -- again, I go back -- it's not unlike the advance man's manual. Everything -- he was a creature of habit, and he had these systems, and that served him very well, I think.

**Timothy Naftali**

What -- when would he normally end a day?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, he would end 6:30, 7:00, go over for dinner. But then he would eat, and then he would start again. I mean, he was, I would think, kind of a compulsive worker. I mean, he worked until late in the evening.

**Timothy Naftali**

When would you go home?

**Dwight Chapin**

We would go home, usually, shortly after the President left to go to the mansion. And Haldeman would give us notice, we have like five minutes, and then we would pile into the car, again, Haldeman, Higby and myself, and we would work all the way home, answering questions, responding to Bob's demands, and getting whatever marching orders we needed.

**Timothy Naftali**

When did you first hear about China? When did you first learn that the President had a secret policy towards China?

**Dwight Chapin**

My first indication on the China thing was the day that he arrived back at Key Biscayne, when Kissinger arrived at Key Biscayne by helicopter. And Bob told me that we were going to go into NBC studios that evening. That the President was going to make an announcement to the nation. And that's when I first knew about this.

**Timothy Naftali**

What do you remember of the Pentagon Papers incident, of the climate in the White House at the time that the Pentagon Papers were published?

**Dwight Chapin**

The President was furious. Kissinger was furious. It was very intense. It was a little like walking on egg shells. I mean, it was just a tense, tense time. I knew nothing about the details of it or -- I would like to make a comment, though, about this atmosphere at the White House, because I've spent years thinking

about it. And, you know, there were times like the Pentagon Papers when we were in a bind, something had happened or whatever, and things tense up. But for the most part, you know, any -- the references to, like, an era of criminality or, like, people there were trying to, you know, rape the country of its democracy or, you know, these overviews of, you know, the Berlin Wall and Nixon inaccessible and Nixon hiding out in the Executive Office Building and this kind of, like, this cloud that was over the Nixon White House, I mean, I just don't see it that way. I didn't see it that way then, as I recall. I mean, sure we have our -- we have incidences, we have times when there's incredible stress. In fact, there's stress a great deal of the time. It's the nature of the building and the job and everything else. But the idea that there was some kind of a sinister underpinning or motive is just something I think has gotten into the dialogue on this that's not true. I would hope that you would ask a lot of these men and women this, because I think it really does injustice. Was Nixon paranoid? Yes, about a lot of things, but he also had the right to be based upon what had happened to him over the years and things that he had gone through. And to understand Richard Nixon, you have to look at what happened to that man along each step of his ascent to the White House. And so, therefore, he took on this self-survival, if you will, cloak and that led to other things happening. I mean, you know, the we versus them, I mean, you're hearing the same thing now, we versus them. You're hearing it about the Bush administration. We heard it about the Clinton administration. And I bet they have lists that are, maybe not labeled enemy lists, because nobody is that dumb anymore, but I mean, they all have their lists. But with Nixon, it's the enemies list and it's -- you know, it always has this sinister twist. And to me, as an observer, I just don't think it's fair, and I don't think it's really truthful of what was there. And I -- the other thing I'd like to say is that we -- I've never laughed as much as when I worked in the Nixon White House. I mean, there were pranks, there were these incredible friendships where people could, you know -- the sense of humor was the leveling factor. The sense of humor of various situations or things -- messes we would find ourselves in or whatever it might be and we -- and it was our senses of humor and our personalities that made it all, you know, nice.

**Timothy Naftali**

Tell us some of the people who had good sense of humors.

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, it's endless.

**Timothy Naftali**

Give us a few.

**Dwight Chapin**

I mean, Ziegler, Jerry Warren, Henry Cashen, Higby, Larry Higby, Ken Cole, Ehrlichman, very funny man, Kissinger. Kissinger has a wonderful sense of humor. Now, Kissinger, you know, he's a little on the paranoid side at that point in time. And I think when you look at Henry you have got to say, what was Henry Kissinger there in his 40s? I mean, I think he was in his 40s. I mean, here's a guy in his 40s. He's entirely different now than a man in his 80s, you know, and he had certain insecurities there and vis-à-vis Nixon and so forth. Haig. Haig's got a great sense of humor, wonderful sense of humor. So I mean, everybody's mixing it up there, and the person with probably the less toleration for the sense of humor was Haldeman. When Bob was -- Bob would enjoy a good joke or something, but he would --

you know, he was all business all the time, and I think he -- there was just a lot of pressure on him constantly, and so I'm not sure that he felt as relaxed in that kind of environment. Flanigan would know more about that on the senior staff level, probably.

**Timothy Naftali**

Can you remember any of the pranks?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, well, I mean, some that I can't talk about. But just, you know, jokes and things, yeah. I mean --

**Paul Musgrave**

We have three minutes

**Timothy Naftali**

Pardon me?

**Paul Musgrave**

You have three minutes left.

**Timothy Naftali**

Okay, do you want to ask something?

**Paul Musgrave**

Yeah, did you ever wake up at the office one day and find a bust of Susan B. Anthony looking back at you?

**Dwight Chapin**

No.

**Paul Musgrave**

This is something that Barbara Franklin and her crew would do to people who had maligned the women of the White House.

**Dwight Chapin**

Right.

**Timothy Naftali**

Apparently Ron Ziegler found it staring at him quite often.

**Dwight Chapin**

I hadn't heard that, no. If it did, Ziegler would never talk about it or something, you know. I mean, Ron was -- is an interesting figure. Ron was so -- they put him in such a difficult position, press secretary, and he was young, he was not experienced, and they put him in this incredible role because they really were -- knew that they were going to have problems with the press, Nixon had always had problems with the press. And they took Herb Klein, who was the senior person who understood the press better than anybody else at the White House -- they put Herb over in the Executive Office Building, made him director of communications, used his press contacts to outgo stories, and Ron worked his tail off. I mean, to his everlasting credit, I mean, he did everything possible to keep his head above water. I mean, he would study constantly. He was -- he really gave it his very, very best.

**Dwight Chapin**

I don't remember whether Humphrey was there.

**Timothy Naftali**

Everything has to be -- okay. Early 1968, it looks as if Robert Kennedy is going to jump in, he does jump into the campaign. Did you ever talk to candidate Nixon about the effect that Robert Kennedy was having on the campaign? Did he see -- did he think that Robert Kennedy would be the nominee on the Democratic side?

**Dwight Chapin**

I don't think he thought that, that Kennedy would ever be the nominee. He was definitely -- I mean, he would be -- he had gone through the Kennedy thing, and he knows how the Kennedys think, and when they're determined and so forth, that they're going to achieve a goal, that they'll give it everything that they have. But on the other hand, you had Johnson there, who was the buffer, and Humphrey. And the idea that the party would move that far to the left, I think he just discounted that Kennedy could get there in 1968. '72 might be a whole different story in terms of getting the nomination, but '68. And we ran into him up in Oregon. Kennedy was campaigning there the same time we were. And then we went back to New York, and we were in New York. Nixon was at his apartment when Kennedy was shot in California. And I remember that I got a call, like, at 4:00 in the morning or 3:00 in the morning that this had happened, and I took the first train I could get into Manhattan. And I had a little office in Nixon's apartment, a little cubby hole type office, because I spent a lot of time there. He had a lot of meetings there and people coming and going, and they needed somebody to handle that. That was my job. So anyway, when I arrived, Jim Rowley, the head of the United States Secret Service, was already there with a couple of other people. And within two hours, there were technicians there putting in cameras and so forth. And that's when we got Bill Duncan and Chuck Zaboro [phonetic sp], the two lead Secret Service agents that became part of our campaign operation. I mean, they were not campaigners, but I mean, they were the coordinators of the Secret Service. And it changed my role because I had kind of -- although I'm not a security person, I mean, I had to make sure that nothing went haywire to the degree that a layman can, but all of a sudden we've got Secret

Service with us. In fact -- and I don't know whether anybody is -- whether people are aware, in 1968, in California, Bob Haldeman came to me and he said, "We have a very serious problem. There's a guy, a person, a sniper, who's going to take a shot at the President in Panorama City tomorrow, and we can't find him. They can't find him. The Secret Service can't find him, and so we're going to change our whole routine." And Panorama City was important because -- to me -- because back when I was a field man back in the '62 campaign, I did put together one event which happened to have been in Panorama City, and I was getting ready to revisit this place of my little success, if you will. So it was the only -- there was one other time I'll come to in a minute but Nixon -- we went out to Panorama City, Nixon -- the car pulled right up to the stage, which normally never happens. I mean, right to the steps of the stage. Because, you know, we have a crowd out there of several thousand who were expecting to see him. They can't find the guy that's going to take -- the sniper. And so the idea was -- I disappeared, the last thing they needed was some aide in the way. Nixon went up onto the stage, said -- thanked everybody for coming, said that he had had -- that something had happened, that he had to go make a - - do whatever it was he used as his excuse, and he maybe was on that stage for two and a half minutes, two and a half or three minutes. The decision was that he had to go through with it in terms of at least making an appearance, but everything about how we did it was changed. Anybody that had watched how we had been campaigning or whatever had been changed. And anyway, that's -- that was the only attempt, or probably not attempt but possible attempt on him that I was familiar with.

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, did they find --

**Dwight Chapin**

I think they found the guy a few days later. I mean, I'd have to -- you'd have to check the news story. I mean, somehow they eliminated that -- him as a potential thing. It was very California, Panorama City oriented. It wasn't like this guy is going to follow him around the country until he can get a -- get at him.

**Timothy Naftali**

When the campaign began in '68, Nixon assumed that he'd be running against LBJ, is that not correct? Because LBJ doesn't get out until March.

**Dwight Chapin**

Right, right, we were in the car coming back. It was a Sunday evening, and we had just gotten back from Wisconsin or one of the primary states, I think Wisconsin. And we were driving from La Guardia into Kennedy -- into the city from La Guardia Airport, and -- when we got the word that Johnson had just pulled out. And so that was a big one.

**Timothy Naftali**

During this campaign, did he -- did you hear him hint at all that he would change U.S. policy towards China?

**Dwight Chapin**

Towards China? No. And, Tim, that's not the kind of thing I would catch. I mean, I wish I could say I would have caught it but, I mean, no. There is one story I think I mentioned to you on the phone, very significant in my opinion. Humphrey is making headway, but he really needs to separate himself from Johnson on the war, so he decided to do this in Salt Lake City with a major speech on Vietnam. That same day, we were arriving at the Cadillac Hotel in Detroit. Nixon was going to address the American Legion the next morning. When we arrived at the -- in the hotel suite, Pat Buchanan, who is always staying up on the news, informed Mr. Nixon that Humphrey had made this speech and had separated himself from Johnson. Nixon looked over at me and he said, "Get the President on the phone." Well, I had never called the President of the United States. I didn't even know what to do. So I went down the hallway and found Rose Mary Woods and I said, "Rose, you know, the President wants to talk to -- or Mr. Nixon wants to talk to President Johnson. What do I do?" She said, "Well, just call the White House operators. 202-244 -- whatever it was, and tell them that you have Mr. Nixon calling. So I went back in, dialed the White House, and the White House operators came on. I said, "I have former Vice President Nixon here, who would like to speak to President Johnson." And she said, "Thank you," and there was this pause. And then she came back on and she said, "I need to speak with the former Vice President to identify him." So I said, "Sir," I said, "the operators would like to chat with you to identify you." The next thing I hear is this, "Millie, how are you? How's Kate?" you know. And, of course, Nixon knew all the White House operators. They didn't turn over when somebody left, and so he obviously made the identification, he used their first names. There was this pause and then I hear, "Hello, Mr. President, Dick Nixon." "Yes," he says, "yes." He says, "Well," he says, "I want you to know I just heard what Hubert did out in Salt Lake, and I want you to know that I'm still with you." And then they chatted a few more minutes, and they hung up the phone. So the next morning, Nixon goes and he addresses the American Legion. After he addresses them, we're headed back out to the airport. We're about halfway out to the airport, and Bill Duncan, the lead Secret Service agent, kind of turns and he said, "Mr. Nixon, that's the President's motorcade going into town," because Johnson was on his way into town to address the American Legion himself. About that time, the phone rings, and it is President Johnson calling Mr. Nixon. So Duncan says, "I have President Johnson on the phone here for you," and Nixon gets on this phone. And he said, "Yes, yes, Mr. President." He said, "Well, I have warmed them up for you. Right." Then he chuckles and he says, "Yeah," he says, "No, I don't think they want to hear from Herbert -- from Hubert." And that was that, and we went on out to the airport.

**Timothy Naftali**

That's remarkable. How are we doing for time? Let me ask you about -- later on, the President would talk about -- when he was President, Nixon would talk about Johnson's campaign intelligence operation in the '68 campaign. Johnson. Was there [unintelligible]?

**Dwight Chapin**

Whether we were bugged?

**Timothy Naftali**

Yes.

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, Rose was always convinced -- Rose Mary Woods -- was always convinced we were bugged. We had a crew that did check our various hotels, checked Nixon's apartment, looked at the telephones. We did, you know, certain things to -- because we had a feeling that people could be listening, whether it was Johnson or some campaign organization or whatever it would be. Other than that, I have no knowledge, I just have no knowledge.

**Timothy Naftali**

What kind of coordination did you have with the Agnew campaign?

**Dwight Chapin**

I had none. Bryce Harlow would travel with Vice President Agnew, the candidate, Governor Agnew. Buchanan would travel occasionally with Agnew. And other people were assigned -- I'm trying to remember exactly who was assigned. I think Nick Ruwe and Roy Gooderall [phonetic sp] got assigned to him later, but I did not have anything to do with that. I mean, he might as well have been on the moon as far as I was concerned. My area of concern was Nixon.

**Timothy Naftali**

Because I think one of -- the FBI did monitor calls from his campaign airplane, Agnew's, because of the Anna Chenault issue. The question of -- the negotiations were going on between the United States and the Vietnamese government -- the North Vietnamese government.

**Dwight Chapin**

Is that true? Because I heard Jack Valenti on "Imus in the Morning" on November 22nd two years ago -- because they always bring him on on the Kennedy anniversary -- and he talked about this. He said that Nixon had really prolonged the war, told them -- told Anna to tell them they could get a better deal with us than you'll get with Johnson and so forth. I mean, I just don't believe this, but --

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, there -- certainly she made the case that she played a role. And Tommy Corcoran, her boyfriend, was making that case in Washington, there's evidence of that. It's fragmentary. There's no question she was in touch with the South Vietnamese ambassador. And she was making calls to the Nixon campaign, and the FBI was monitoring the calls coming into the South African -- the Vietnamese Embassy. And that material has been declassified, so you can actually look at it. Let's talk about the end of the campaign. Are you confident you that you were going to win '68?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, I think we were -- I think I learned my lesson in 1962, and I was on pins and needles. The polls were showing that we were a little bit ahead, but this thing was closing, and it was going to be touch and go. I was looking yesterday, just by -- this is by coincidence, actually -- at a picture. I took the first picture of Mr. Nixon when he had been told that he won at the Waldorf-Astoria. I had a little tiny

camera, and I snapped these pictures. In fact, I'm the -- I was the one that went into the bedroom and said, "ABC has just declared you the winner." And he was in there with Mitchell, Haldeman, and Ehrlichman, and they all proceeded right into the parlor room. And there's Nixon looking at the set, but in the background is this -- is the window, and light is streaming through the window, and it reminded me that it was really after sunup the next day before that election was really decided. I mean, it was so close, and it all turned, I think, on Illinois again. And just a little aside on that, I don't know if anybody has mentioned this to you. Around 1:30 or 2:00 in the morning the phone rang in the suite at the Waldorf, this is election night, and it was Mike Wallace calling for John Mitchell. And John -- I went and got John. John came, got on the phone, and he said, "Mike, that's right." He said, "That's right." He said, "You tell the mayor when they bring in a box of ballots, we'll bring in a box of ballots. They bring in a box, we'll bring in a box." And Mitchell had withheld, down in southern Illinois, many boxes of ballots through the campaign organization. Don't ask me how you do this. The whole thing sounds very suspicious, but, I mean, there was a -- it was, by God, they had learned their lesson in 1960 with the Daley organization, and there was no way this was going to happen again. And it was a little bit of the drama in the -- on election night.

**Timothy Naftali**

But Mike Wallace had called in to find out what the campaign was going to do?

**Dwight Chapin**

He had to find out if it was true or not, because these ballots, they knew the ballots were missing down state, they hadn't been reported in. And Mitchell wouldn't let them release them to be reported in until he was certain Daley had put all the ballots on the table.

**Paul Musgrave**

Wasn't Rose Mary Woods' brother, Joe, I think it was --

**Dwight Chapin**

He was sheriff.

**Paul Musgrave**

He was sheriff of Cook County.

**Dwight Chapin**

Cook County, oh, there's some great stories on that. I mean, we would show up -- the first time -- when Nixon was elected President, one of our first trips was to Chicago. And the plane comes in, lands, Sheriff Woods is there with his sheriff cars and all the lights and so forth, and we go zooming into town. I mean, it was quite elaborate. We get upstairs and Nixon says, "Where was the mayor?" I said, "I have no idea." He says, "I want to know where the mayor is." This is Chicago. Uh-oh. And he says, "And, usually, there's a band." The Irish whatever it is band of Chicago always plays for every President when he arrives in Chicago, has historically over the years. Nixon knew this. Of course, nobody else would know this, but he knew this. And the upshot of this was that Rose Woods had

coordinated most of this trip and had been in touch with her brother. And therefore, because her brother couldn't stand Mayor Daley, Mayor Daley had been left in the cold, and Mayor Daley didn't do anything. Well, I was the one that called Colonel Jack Riley on behalf of Mr. Nixon to apologize to the mayor and the city of Chicago. We did this after we got back, and we found out what the -- what had happened. So it was determined that, from now on, when we went to Chicago, one of my jobs was to call Colonel Jack Riley and say, "Colonel, the President would like to come to Chicago, is it a good time or not?" And, you know, the mayor would be happy to see us there. So the next time, the very next time we arrive in Chicago, Mayor Daley is at the airport. We have Chicago police lights and everything. We have a band at the hotel. But not only that, we have fireboats out on the lake doing red, white, and blue water and everything. I mean, it was like just night and day, but everything changed. And so we had, from that point on, very good relations with Mayor Daley. In 1972, Nixon was to go there and campaign. It was going to be one of the last stops. And there was a horrible, horrible el-train wreck. Like, this is the week before the election. Nixon says, "Have you called Colonel Riley?" I said, "Well, I will." Colonel Riley said, "I'll talk to the mayor." The mayor said, "I really would appreciate it if the President didn't come into the city because of this -- what we have going on here. This is really horrible." I mean, our rally was like the next day or something. I mean, it was right on top of it. Colonel Riley says, "But the mayor is suggesting that you do it at the airport, and if you could wait three or four days." Three or four days later we flew into the airport, did the rally at the airport, and left. And Mayor Daley is the one that basically -- the Democrat -- was the one that orchestrated, you know, what we did in Chicago.

**Timothy Naftali**

During the '68 campaign, what role, if any, did political intelligence play?

**Dwight Chapin**

In which campaign?

**Timothy Naftali**

In the '68 campaign. Since it was a tight campaign, I guess it would have been a great desire to know what the Humphrey campaign was doing.

**Dwight Chapin**

Right, and I had nothing to do with that. But we had sources, and my recollection right this second is that they were media people, that they were favorable media people that would travel with the Humphrey campaign. How many there were, who they were, I have no knowledge, but there was some way that we would be getting certain information. But to my knowledge, this was not information from strategy sessions where it would just be the Humphrey people, you know, probably gossip and all that kind of stuff. I just don't really know.

**Timothy Naftali**

The President --

**Dwight Chapin**

In every campaign, you know, there is this kind of -- I mean, it's going on right now. The Humphrey -- or the Clinton people want to know what the Obama people are doing and dadadadadadada. I mean, this is part of the world. I mean, this is one of things that's one of the tragedies of part of the Watergate thing that I was involved with, the Dick Tuck type stuff. I mean, I'm sure we'll come to this later, but this stuff had been going on and is happening, and it was kind of like all of a sudden kind of a double standard in the whole process versus somebody having cleaned it up many years before.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did Dick Tuck play a role in the '68 campaign on the Democratic side?

**Dwight Chapin**

Probably, I mean, if he did, it would have been in California. But he was very involved in '60. He was definitely involved in '62. That's when I met him. He was at the Republican convention in '64, so I can't imagine that he wasn't. I mean, he's a character, he's out there. You ought to meet him some time; he's a real character.

**Timothy Naftali**

Tell us about meeting him in '62.

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, it was just, you know, some Nixon event, and Sandy or somebody said, "I want you to meet" -- you know, "this is Dick Tuck." We all knew that he was a Democratic prankster, and he would be around. I mean, it was just -- you know, God only knows what he was up to, you know, at that particular moment but, I mean, there was nothing --

**Timothy Naftali**

Nothing covert about him?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, no, no, he's a very -- he was a likable man.

**Timothy Naftali**

Do we have some more minutes on this particular tape?

**Male Speaker**

We have six minutes.

**Timothy Naftali**

Okay, let's talk about Nixon's meeting with Humphrey, please, after the campaign in '68.

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, Nixon won, and went down and saw Eisenhower and then went to Key Biscayne. Humphrey and his running mate, Senator Muskie, and their families were going down to the Virgin Islands or down into the Bahamas or someplace to kind of recover from the campaign. And the first thing that struck me was that they came on a prop plane. Johnson didn't let them have -- or the campaign -- they didn't have a jet, they were on a military prop plane. And they came into an air base called Opa-locka or something. It's near --

**Timothy Naftali**

[Unintelligible]

**Dwight Chapin**

Yeah, it's near Key Biscayne. The thing that was so interesting about it, I mean, it was -- Nixon went down and met with Kennedy when Nixon lost in '60 in Florida. I think Kennedy was at West Palm Beach or something. This time it was Humphrey coming. The Secret Service had established a room on the second floor of this terminal building, and they had stationed their agents outside of it, it had been swept and so forth. So when Humphrey arrived, and Muskie and the others, Nixon greeted them, and then he took Humphrey, and I showed him the way. We went up these stairs and into this room. And he had told me on the way over, "Ten minutes. Ten minutes, come in, I want -- you know, this meeting will end in 10 minutes." So I was right outside the door, the two men are in the room, after about 10 minutes I go in, he waves me off. So I waited about another 10 minutes, went back in again, waves me off. And so, the third time that I went in, the men are standing, and he has his arm over Humphrey's shoulders. Humphrey is crying, he's got his handkerchief out, he's dabbing his face. I mean, he was really, just really cracked up. And Nixon is saying, you know, "Hubert, I know, I know how you feel, I've been there." I mean, and he's saying, "Well, Dick, you know, I'll do anything I can to help you." I -- "you know, he could hardly get the words out. And so Nixon says, "Would you -- do you want to have Dwight tell the press that we're not going to do the" -- they had a press opportunity planned. They're not going to do the press opportunity. And he said, "No, I'll be okay." So, I mean, it was just incredible to see these two warriors that had fought this incredible battle here, and one's got his arm over the other one's shoulder, and the other guy is crying, and there was something that was just so incredibly patriotic and nice about it. I mean, it's just -- particularly in today's environment, you can't imagine our political figures today being like this. In any case, we went down, they talked to the press. Humphrey and his party get back on the plane, and they're departing, they leave. And Mr. Nixon says to me, he says, "Dwight," he says, "That's so hard, so tough. It's so tough," he says. But he says, "I never cried."

**Timothy Naftali**

Was Muskie with the group?

**Dwight Chapin**

Muskie was with the group.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did you see him?

**Dwight Chapin**

I don't even have a recollection of seeing him, but he was with -- because it was both families. In 1969, and this would've been, like, early spring, like May or June, so we had just gotten there, and my buzzer rings. And that means come to Haldeman's office, "bzzzzz." So I go over to Haldeman's -- we have light systems. Light systems, buzzer systems, you name it, we've got it. So I walk into Haldeman's office, and it's Bob, John Ehrlichman, Larry Higby, and me. And Bob says, "Have a seat." He had a conference table there. He said, "John Mitchell is going to join us in a few minutes. He's in with the President." And about that time, Herb Klein came through the door. So Bob says, "We have a problem, and John wants to talk to us." Well, it turns out that J. Edgar Hoover is about ready to go with a story about this group of gays, men in the Nixon White House, and the men are Haldeman, Ehrlichman, Higby, Chapin. And the proof is that they -- he has had a photographer following us to Key Biscayne and so forth, taking nighttime pictures of us going in and out of each other's villas. Well, the pictures were true, and we were down there, but we would go over to watch television or whatever it was, because we were down there on duty. So Mitchell comes -- at that time Haldeman's office was adjacent to Nixon's little office, you could walk right in -- and Mitchell comes in, having just left the President. And John says, "The President has asked that I, we get to the bottom of this, and I am in charge of it." And he says to Herb Klein, he said, "Herb, I want you to work with me and with Jack Anderson, and we will, you know, we'll have to handle this." And then he looks at us and he says, "We're going to need depositions from all you guys, and we're going to have to meet it head on." And then Mitchell kind of points his finger at Klein, and he says, "And you're going to be the contact with Anderson, and we're going to get this solved. The President wants to know the truth." And so, you know, here we all are. I mean, you know, I mean, I can remember going home that night, we were scared to death. I mean, this is like a time bomb. This thing gets out and gets in the press, and Anderson gets it going, and, you know, it's a disaster for all of us, you know, and it's not true. So the next day, each of us, individually -- separately, I should say -- we go into the Cabinet Room. We sit across -- right across from us -- we take and put up our hand, and we are sworn in, and then each of us are questioned by J. Edgar Hoover. He asked all of the questions, and the transcript of this was provided to Jack Anderson, and that's how it was stopped.

**Timothy Naftali**

And Hoover was planning to give this to Anderson?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, no, Anderson was going to go with the story, Jack Anderson, the columnist. You're familiar with him? He was the one that was going -- had put the photographer down there and had researched -- I've always thought if I ever see Brit Hume, I'm going to ask him, because he was working for Anderson at that time, I believe. So Anderson's getting ready to go with the story. Anderson calls Klein. Klein calls and tells Mitchell. Mitchell goes and sees Nixon, meanwhile tells Haldeman, "I want to meet with all of you guys as a group." He's in, meets with -- the President says, "I want you to get to the bottom of this, John." John comes up with this idea of how to get to the bottom. He brings J. Edgar Hoover over and has us deposed in the Cabinet Room with J. Edgar Hoover doing the asking of the questions.

**Timothy Naftali**

J. Edgar Hoover --

**Dwight Chapin**

J. Edgar Hoover asked questions.

**Timothy Naftali**

J. Edgar Hoover asked you if you were homosexual --

**Dwight Chapin**

Yeah.

**Timothy Naftali**

-- if you were gay?

**Dwight Chapin**

Yeah, and what these relationships were. By the way, none of these transcripts can be found. When J. Edgar Hoover died, he had a safe at his house, and I think, I don't quite remember exactly how this happened, but Haldeman asked that they look and see, because none of us know where these transcripts are. We have no idea where these things are floating around, or somebody's cellar, or where they are. But we, you know, we were sworn in. J. Edgar Hoover's secretary was the one that was a steno, and she took the notes.

**Timothy Naftali**

How long was the deposition?

**Dwight Chapin**

Oh, only, what, 10 minutes, 15 minutes, I mean, it was just a series of questions.

**Timothy Naftali**

Sorry about that. Were we at the same question?

**Paul Musgrave**

Yeah.

**Timothy Naftali**

Yeah, let me re-ask that one, thanks. How long did this deposition last?

**Dwight Chapin**

A very short period of time. Like, 10, 15 minutes, 20 minutes. I mean, it was just a set series of questions to try to anchor what we were doing in Key Biscayne, and what we were involved in, and was this an act that would be embarrassing to the President?

**Timothy Naftali**

What were the consequences for this?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, the consequences were that Anderson backed off. I mean --

**Timothy Naftali**

But I meant in terms of, was there any effect to the way in which --

**Dwight Chapin**

You mean after-effect?

**Timothy Naftali**

Yes.

**Dwight Chapin**

No, no, I mean, we solved -- I mean, first of all, I don't believe Nixon believed it. I don't believe Mitchell believed it. Klein definitely didn't believe -- this was, you know, something that was concocted, that was mythical, but could've been, politically, very damaging. I mean, it could've been horrible.

**Dwight Chapin**

And that's a different era, too. Yeah, I mean, now, maybe it would be --

**Timothy Naftali**

-- in that era, yes. Do you remember the discussions that people had about getting rid of J. Edgar Hoover? Because there was some -- I mean, he was very old at that point.

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes.

**Timothy Naftali**

And they wanted him to retire.

**Dwight Chapin**

Right, and, I mean, Nixon wouldn't move on it. He just wouldn't move on it. And I can't remember specific discussions, but I know you're right. I mean, I know, how do we move him along and out?

**Timothy Naftali**

Let's just ask about how some other players fit into the White House, from your perspective. Charles Colson, what role is he playing in the White House at the beginning?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, Chuck and I were constantly at loggerheads. Whatever systems we had per my example, like the organization from an advance man, Chuck was like a bull in a china shop. I mean, he would not -- I mean, you were supposed to come out of the White House or out of the Oval Office if there was something that needed action, you needed to be debriefed or write a memo, I mean, he could care less. Chuck was his own agent. The President loved him in the sense that he knew if he gave Chuck something to do, it would be done. The President liked Chuck's aggressiveness, his determination, his rowdiness, if you will. And Chuck was just difficult to deal with. He would -- you know, he just wasn't cooperative, in a comparable sense, I mean, like the other people on the staff were. You never knew where he was -- what was going to happen. He was, kind of, a free agent.

**Timothy Naftali**

His office in the Executive Office Building was very close to Nixon's hideaway, wasn't it?

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes, but I wouldn't draw any conclusion from that. One of my oldest friends, Dick Howard, worked for Chuck, and he was in that same little office thing where Chuck was. And Chuck -- I do know that, at one point, I went in there and he had just gotten off the phone with the President, and he alluded that he had just taped him. And I came unglued, because I don't think the President knew that Chuck was taping him. And I have no idea where the tapes are or if they exist.

**Timothy Naftali**

There was a story that used to go around that Haldeman wanted to know whenever Colson went in to see the President.

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes, yeah, okay, we couldn't keep track of what was going on. We had to work at keeping track of what was going on with Chuck. I mean, you've got to keep in mind we have an incredibly well-tuned, well-oiled machine. It's one of the reasons there was a Watergate, is because Watergate moved into being a managerial handling instead of a political thing. Had Watergate been handled in a political way, the results would've been entirely different than what ended up happening, because we tried to manage it, very ineffectively, by the way. So, but anyway, so we have this system. And in comes Chuck, and Chuck doesn't play by the system. So, you know, we're having to figure out what the hell's going on and what instructions is he under today. I guess I'm overdramatizing it but, I mean, there's a lot of truth in what I'm saying here. Chuck was a difficult one to handle. I think he would say that now, I think he'd say, "I was kind of a difficult character at the White House."

**Timothy Naftali**

Were there any other free agents like him?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, they weren't allowed. I mean, Chuck got away with this because of the power of his personality. And he's smart, I mean, he's very smart. Were there any other free agents like this? Not that survived, not that I can recall right now. Maybe Finch, in some senses. Finch is a very interesting guy. Bob was a wonderful human being, but if Bob thought that it was in Nixon's interest to go talk to reporter X, he'd just go do it. And then, when he would get caught or -- maybe it wasn't a reporter, maybe it would be some substantive issue with somebody -- you know, he would plead his ignorance to the system and move on. But he, occasionally, would be the only other one that comes to mind right now that would be this way.

**Timothy Naftali**

What about Harlow?

**Dwight Chapin**

Harlow's wonderful. Harlow -- Bryce was an incredibly fine influence on the White House. On a personal basis, when I went there, they gave me Nell Yates as my secretary. Nell Yates had started with Truman. She was the consummate professional White House secretary that was part of the bureaucracy. When Haldeman heard that she had been there for the Johnson years and the Kennedy years, let alone back to Truman, he said that I had to fire her, I had to get rid of her, get her replaced. And Bryce got right in the middle of it really quickly as to what a pro she was and that this -- because they were bringing me in, and I had no knowledge on how this bureaucracy worked, and the White House staff, and so forth. And she was the perfect one to couple into my operation, to help explain things to me, and to be really of a service. And Bryce knew this, and so he intervened, and Nell stayed.

And Nell stayed all the way through until the Clinton years. Oh, but the other thing would be, the other thing on Bryce is that, had Bryce been listened to on the Watergate stuff, I mean, he's one of the men that probably could've helped engineer Nixon around it, because Bryce was a political realist. He had tremendous clout up on the Hill. He was well respected by everyone. And, had he been allowed to operate and to advise on the Watergate stuff, I think he could've helped us engineer around that problem, which really was basically as simple as firing three or four people.

**Paul Musgrave**

Which ones?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, probably Mitchell. And we had the legal problem there that goes back to the law firm. I addressed that earlier this morning, I mean, in terms of the relationship, they were so tight. And Nixon never asked John, according to what I've been told -- and I have had several conversations with Mitchell about this stuff in later life -- he'd never ask him anything about Watergate, because he didn't want to know what John knew. Nixon was a lawyer and he didn't want to know what that other lawyer knew, even though John had been his lawyer and, you know, the attorney general. I think Magruder and Dean, Mitchell, the CREEP group.

**Timothy Naftali**

Let's talk about John Dean for a moment. What role was he playing in the White House in its early period?

**Dwight Chapin**

In the early period, John -- when I left prison at Lompoc, the only wire I got was from John Dean congratulating me on getting out, so to speak. I mean, it was weird. When I got ready to go over for my grand jury, Eddie Carlson, the Chairman of the Board of United Airlines, where I was working, called me in. And he said, "Dwight, I understand you've got to go to a grand jury in Washington." He says, "Who's your lawyer?" I say, "Well, John Dean calls me almost every day, gives me instructions." This is way into -- this is April, May of 1973, and he's calling me, okay. Way into that timeframe. So Eddie Carlson says, "Dwight, your lawyer is not John Dean. Your lawyer --" and he got me a United Airlines lawyer that I went over, met with, and went to a grand jury a couple of days later. When John Dean came on the scene, he had this mystique, for lack of -- he was driving a Porsche, dating beautiful women, dressed to the hilt, smart. And he just had this -- it was kind of like out of a novel or something. It was just, it was too good to be true, and was too good to be true, I think. And I don't know that I was as seduced as some of the younger guys by John, but he had this air of invincibility, and he had this relationship he would talk about constantly with Kleindienst and Mitchell, and so forth, I mean, because he had come in through the Justice Department. And, I mean, I had no reason not to trust him. My feeling is that I've never been a subscriber to this, I couldn't tell the President, you know, all that was going on. I mean, I think at one point that he made some comment about not being able to get the President. And, I mean, I find all of this just kind of mind boggling. I mean, John was the President's attorney. It was incumbent upon him to tell Nixon certain things, and he didn't do that. And, while I'm not an expert on Watergate, I am somewhat an expert on accessibility to Nixon and this Berlin Wall concept. And anybody that needed to get in on something as important as this, and as --

with this incredible denominator of criminality involved, and so forth -- there's something that just doesn't ring true with me about John.

**Timothy Naftali**

Talk for a minute about the Berlin Wall concept. What was it?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, the Berlin Wall concept, or analogy, is that the Germans, Haldeman and Ehrlichman, had created this thing called a Berlin Wall, and Nixon was inside the wall and nobody could get to him. And it was a way of slamming the President. I mean, it would be slamming Haldeman and Ehrlichman, but the ultimate victim was Nixon. The way that it worked was the way the President wanted it to work, or he would've changed it. I mean, he wasn't oblivious to what was being written in the press and so forth. He knew that these comments were being made, and he had the option to change it if he wanted to have changed it. He wanted it that way. He wanted these systems. I mean, if you are a person who is not used to dealing with a certain set way that things are going to function -- this happens in corporations, in government, I mean, all over the place -- if you aren't going to accept that, then you are going to have problems and you're going to probably end up criticizing it or attacking it or whatever. The Berlin Wall got a lot of support in the media from people on the inside who were not used to having to deal in the systematic way that we were being asked to operate. And we had a staff system and all this other stuff, and you either operated that way or, you know, you had a problem. And so they're bitching about it and moaning about it and so forth, because they don't want to play by the rules. And so, Washington being Washington, they leak things, or whatever it might be. I mean, I really think we had less leaks and so forth than what has been experienced in administrations since our time, but we did have our share. And we had people that would talk to the media and that were friends that would run into people at Georgetown cocktail parties and all that kind of stuff and make offhanded comments, and, of course, Washington thrives on that. So the Berlin Wall thing, I think, got way out of proportion to what it really was. And nobody really stepped back to try to analyze what's going on here and why it existed.

**Timothy Naftali**

Let's talk about -- since you've mentioned cocktail parties -- how much socializing did you and your wife do with your peers?

**Dwight Chapin**

With my peers?

**Timothy Naftali**

Yeah.

**Dwight Chapin**

Tons, tons, a great deal.

**Timothy Naftali**

You had parties?

**Dwight Chapin**

Oh, always, very lively, very, you know, fun.

**Timothy Naftali**

The Zieglers, the Highbys, who were the --

**Dwight Chapin**

Highbys, Ron Walker and his family, Dick Howard and his family, Ken Cole and his family, the Magruders at Christmastime, I mean, we all had little kids the same age. I mean, people would have ice-skating parties. There would be, you know, just all kinds of things. But, I mean, we really played hard. I mean, we raised hell on weekends because we had all this pent up stuff, and we're in our 30s, and we're, you know, living.

**Timothy Naftali**

Now, at this time, there's a lot of people about 10 years younger than you, even less than 10 years, who are now starting to march in the anti-war movement. What effect did that have on you? How did you view -- it's a long time ago, but how did you view the movement? I mean, it was happening around you. You could -- Washington was -- there was occasionally a siege on Washington. There were always marches going on. Tell us --

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, there's two things. First of all, I always felt somewhat lacking, that I kind of -- when I was in school and I came out, guys were going to Vietnam, but married men were exempt, and I had just gotten married. And then they started taking married men, but married men with one child were exempt, and we had just had Kimberly. So, I mean, it was kind of like I was just, like, right ahead of the thing, and then the next thing I know, I'm in the White House. And guys my age are over in Vietnam, and dying, and so forth, and that really bothered me. Help me with the other part of the question.

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, I'm just wondering, you've got all of these demonstrations --

**Dwight Chapin**

Right, okay, thanks. I just had a lapse there. I was very cognizant of all of the demonstrations, because all of the White House advance operation reported to me, and then I reported to Haldeman. So we're making trips, we're working with the Secret Service, we're going out on the road constantly, and we have demonstrators that we have to deal with on a constant basis. So, you know, how we planned around them, how we tried to pick venues and control crowds, and so forth, I ended up in all of that,

and it was very sensitive. It had to be handled very carefully because, you know, the media could interpret it any number of different ways. I always -- I don't know. I had been in the office, in the President's office, I don't know, several different occasions where he had a handkerchief out and was wiping tears out of his eyes, and he had been there writing notes to parents of kids that'd been killed. So I came from it that the President was, I mean, doing the very best he could, and he was trying to end it. And so I didn't have much compassion for the people on the streets. I respect their right to demonstrate because that's, you know, that's what the country's about, is freedom of -- but, I mean, I was of the opinion that this was wrong and that it was not being fair to what the President was trying to do. But the power of all of this -- I mean, you know, it's like Kerry and throwing his medals over the fence-- I mean, this thing is so charged and so political, and people are, by the day, by the hour, getting vested into various sides of this thing. And, you know, Nixon had a golden opportunity when he came in vis-à-vis Johnson, but then the longer he stayed there, he couldn't -- he got sucked in, himself, and yet he was trying to extricate us from it. So where am I going here? I'm saying that the demonstrators and all of the people, in my opinion, prolonged the war and caused a problem. They didn't help us get out, they made it worse. And that's just how I view it.

**Timothy Naftali**

How did they make it worse?

**Dwight Chapin**

They made it worse because they sent a message to the enemy, to North Vietnam, and said, "If we just hang on here" -- We're going through this right now. I mean, somehow -- I mean, I'm a believer, I guess, in secret diplomacy, and I hope that, you know, a lot of things are going on now that I don't know anything about, nor should I know. And I kind of come from it that, you know, back in the Jimmy Carter time with the Iranian hostages, when, you know, people were walking out of the White House and talking in the driveway, and the Iranians are hearing that before they hear it through a diplomatic channel. And so, it just gets all screwed up. I believe that the formality of the right kind of diplomatic relations is better than this freelancing stuff. And, anyway, I'm way off on a tangent there, but --

**Timothy Naftali**

Do you remember Kent State?

**Dwight Chapin**

I do, I do. My wife went to Kent State, and my brother-in-law was there when it happened.

**Timothy Naftali**

[unintelligible]

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, I just remember the news coming in about these students being killed. The Ohio guard had fired, and, you know, this was a tragedy. I mean, it was a tragedy, what had happened. I don't recall any

particular discussion with the President. I do recall the incident I'm sure you've talked to Bud about, where the phone rang about 4:30 or 5:00 in the morning and Haldeman says, "I'll be right over to get you." There's a car on the way to get me. And this is when Nixon went to the Lincoln Memorial, and we zoomed, tried to catch him there, but we missed him, and we caught up with him up on the Capitol. And he was walking around where his desk was on the floor of the Capitol, where he had sat and so forth, Nixon was. And then he went over to the Mayflower Hotel, where he and J. Edgar Hoover used to have lunch quite often, and had breakfast. And then we went back to the White House, but it was kind of a strange day.

### Timothy Naftali

What kind of mood was he in?

### Dwight Chapin

Pensive, you know, Nixon -- he, a lot of times, didn't think people understood him. There is one time that I'm going to talk about here, but you could get a view from Ray Price and Pat Buchanan, also. Ray, Pat, and myself, and Nixon are on a plane, and we're flying from Wisconsin to Florida. Bebe is going to pick us up. It's very late at night. It's like, he'd finished a rally. We went and got on the plane. He had one or two of those small bottles of scotch, and he was exhausted, and the next thing I knew, he was crying. And, of course, -- Nixon is sitting next to Ray Price, and right behind him are Pat Buchanan and me. It's a tiny jet, we're just crammed in this jet. But we're all -- and it's like we were just, bing, bing, bing, bing, I mean, we're right there. And Nixon, what brought this about, this emotional uprising out of him, was he was talking with Ray, who was, I think, drafting some stuff for the speech in Miami. You know, they were starting to work on his acceptance speech and how that might work. And this was the one in '72 -- or '68, I mean. And he started talking about his mother and dad and his brother and the brother he had lost to tuberculosis and so forth. I mean, it was really bringing up stuff in him. And it really -- I mean, this guy was a human being. I mean, he was, yeah, he's running for President, and so forth, but I mean, he is just not that different than us. And, you know, he's got these emotions and this -- you know, I wasn't there, but I read or hear about him walking through with Kissinger or, you know, the praying thing, or, you know, this stuff. And I, you know, I kind of get suspect as to how much, how far it's been taken out of context. But because of that plane incident, I can kind of say, "Well, you know, I have been there when he's really been emotional, when he's tugged and pulled. And, you know, what is it about this guy? I mean, you know, what is it about this family thing? Where is this -- what is all this about? And, you know, it's not about him being on drugs, or drunk, or whatever. I mean, I probably spent more time with him from 1967 through into the White House than anybody else on the campaign because I --

[in audio]

### Male Speaker

I'm ready. We have speed [unintelligible]. Whenever you're ready you may begin.

### Timothy Naftali

Dwight, you said that you probably spent more time with candidate Nixon between 1967 and the inauguration than anybody else.

**Dwight Chapin**

I think that's true.

**Timothy Naftali**

And you wanted to make a comment about his sobriety, I think.

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, I didn't want to make a comment-- my point is that he -- no, I don't think I wanted to make a comment about his sobriety, I just -- I made the point that he used great discretion about his drinking. I think he -- there's a family history there. I think it was his father that may have overindulged. There's some family history there. And he was cognizant of that, and he policed himself very well, in terms of everything that I saw. I mean, he did enjoy having a beer. He would drink Dubonnet -- I think it was Nelson Rockefeller that introduced him to Dubonnet -- but he was, you know, he did not have a problem with alcohol that I was familiar with.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did he ever talk to you about the Alger Hiss case?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, never.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did he ever reminisce with you about his time in the Eisenhower White House?

**Dwight Chapin**

No.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did he ever talk to you about the lessons he'd learned from the 1960 campaign?

**Dwight Chapin**

No.

**Timothy Naftali**

But you did, I know --

**Dwight Chapin**

The lessons on the '60 campaign, the only thing there would be things that Haldeman would have shared with me that I think I covered a little earlier in terms of procedural stuff and why we did what we did in '68. The one thing -- I mean, this tanned, rested, and ready thing is very important. For example, he would -- we always worked into the itinerary, into the schedule, during the Presidential campaign these trips to Key Biscayne, at which time, number one, he would be with Bebe Robozo, who was his good friend, and he would have a chance to, kind of, unwind and relax. But he could get out in the sun and get a tan. And it was important, because his skin was very transparent-like and he always looked better if he had a tan. Therefore, what we would do is, he would get his tan while we were in Florida. Then, when we would be on the road for the next week to 10 days, every day he would use a sunlamp. And in my briefcase I had this little collapsible sunlamp thing, and we would set that up every morning. And he would do his two to three minutes, whatever it was, and it would be -- he wouldn't go anything past that because it would have a negative effect because he would look red and burnt. But, I mean, he could keep that tan going throughout the little campaign session until we were back down in Florida again. But I always chuckle, because when people talk about being tanned, rested, and ready, I mean, we had to work hard on keeping that tan alive. But he looked a heck of a lot better, and there were a lot of newspaper stories and everything else about how, you know, good he looked compared to how he had looked back in the '60s.

**Timothy Naftali**

Do you remember the "Esquire" cover of him in 1968?

**Dwight Chapin**

Was the story by Gary Will?

**Timothy Naftali**

Yes, I think so.

**Dwight Chapin**

The only thing I remember about it is me being referred to as Bert Parks, so it was a very personal thing. I don't remember the story. What'd it say?

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, it was about the concept of the new Nixon.

**Dwight Chapin**

Yeah, that hit during the primary season, I think, or maybe even a little before. And, actually, if I'm recalling right, it was a very important story because it kind of set a tone that was picked up by some of the other media, and so forth.

**Timothy Naftali**

Let's talk about 1971. Let's talk about the concern about reelection. In 1971, my understanding is, reelection was not considered a sure thing, as you began to think about the next campaign.

**Dwight Chapin**

Right, the -- anyone that doesn't take an election seriously is crazy. And we did not -- I don't believe that the prevailing thought was that McGovern would get the nomination, that it would be Humphrey again, or it would be Muskie or one of the other contenders. So there was nothing set that said, "Hey, you know, we're going to have an easy, you know, way through this with George McGovern." But even putting that aside, Nixon would never take any campaign for granted. So our machinery, for lack of a better term, our political machinery all started getting honed for this process. The fundraising, getting the money in order, getting, you know, all of the elements of the campaign lined up, how it would work, this was done in a very political and professional way, in my opinion. I mean, it was --

**Timothy Naftali**

You were still appointment secretary.

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes.

**Timothy Naftali**

Before we get to the more famous aspects of this, what role were you playing in shaping the campaign? [unintelligible] campaign?

**Dwight Chapin**

My role in the campaign was focused primarily on two things: the usage of the President, the usage of the Vice President, and the Cabinet. And so, what our schedule operation did was to say, "Okay, how is all of this going to work?" Oh, I should also mention I had a role in the planning of the convention which was under the direction of Bill Timmons, but I participated in that operation. But mainly, we wanted to decrease or, to limit, as much as possible, Nixon's campaigning. We wanted to use, kind of, a Rose Garden strategy, if you will, and to use all of the trappings of the White House, because our competitors would not be able to do that, and that we would have our chief advocates be the Vice President and the members of the Cabinet. We were incredibly skilled and effective at using the Cabinet out on the hustings. Putting them in the right cities, figuring out demographically where they should be, we were very good at that.

**Timothy Naftali**

Who were your stars in the Cabinet? Who would you like to use as a surrogate?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, we had several stars. Romney was good. John Volpe was good. In fact, John Volpe was a stem-winder, Italian, Catholic. So, I mean, he was very upfront and prominent. We couldn't use Bill Rodgers or Mel Laird. We could use Finch. Who else?

**Timothy Naftali**

What about Connally?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, Connally was a star unto himself. I mean, he was so charismatic and, yeah, excellent, excellent.

**Timothy Naftali**

Talk about the Vice President. How did you use the Vice President?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, we used the Vice President in attack mode, so to speak. He would be challenging things, taking on at a different level, in terms of intensity, you know, the anti-war branch, or to take on the media or certain personalities in the media. He was used in that way.

**Timothy Naftali**

Where did the -- oh, let's talk about your advancing to China and advancing Moscow. This is '72.

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes -- '71.

**Timothy Naftali**

'71.

**Dwight Chapin**

In August of '71, Kissinger went to China. Then nine of us went back with Henry in October of '71 to do the preplanning for the trip. And then about 25 of us went back with Al Haig in January of '72 to work on the final aspects of the trip. And then we all went back with Nixon in February.

**Timothy Naftali**

This was complete unknown territory, correct?

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes, it was incredible, it was unbelievable.

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, tell us --

**Dwight Chapin**

It was a very, very -- well, it's so, the China thing, is so -- it was just incredible. I mean, we started out with Henry making his secret trip. Then we started saying, "Okay, how are we going to do this?" Nixon was of the opinion that he wanted to go over there on like a JetStar airplane, a very small airplane. He would take a press pool of five or six people. I mean, this was going to be very limited. He didn't want to turn it into a circus, you know, all of this kind of stuff. But as it grew, I mean, I think we finally ended up with over 350 people, including, you know, military, Secret Service, staff, press, you know, the whole entourage was in that neighborhood, in that number. This was just something that -- the Chinese had never dealt with anything like this. I mean, it's like the ultimate case of a -- the ultimate situation of have and have-nots and two different worlds, so to speak. And we had to go in there and to diplomatically put it together so that we were able to get what we wanted for our American party and for, you know, the security and everything while, you know, giving face- saving things to the Chinese and trying to make it all work for them. I mean, it was very challenging. We came up with some concepts. For example, for our networks we called in Boeing and we got a couple of architect type people, and we developed a 747 that would fly in and become the studio operations for all of the networks, everything would connect to it, and so forth. And we had it all diagrammed, we figured -- all of the equipment was specified. We spent many days on this. And when we went into -- on the October trip and we explained this to the Chinese, they all kind of nodded, and they wanted to think about it and so forth. And we never got any response, we never got any response, we never got any response. Well, we went back with Haig in January -- I mean, we were starting to get panicked on how this was all going to work -- the first thing they did was take us out to the Beijing airport, and we walked into a building that was basically built along the lines of a 747, where everything would go, but there would be no airplane flying in. The equipment could come, and they would put the equipment in this facility. So they had their own solution, and the deal that they wanted to strike was that, when we left, they wanted to buy every piece of the equipment. So, I mean, there were interesting things like that.

**Timothy Naftali**

Is that what happened in the end?

**Dwight Chapin**

I think we sold them certain things. There were certain other, for security reasons, pieces of equipment that couldn't be sold to them.

**Timothy Naftali**

So instead of a 747 coming in --

**Dwight Chapin**

They built their own studio, and that's where the networks worked and so forth, yeah.

**Timothy Naftali**

This would have been the beginning of the 747 era, right? They were pretty new.

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes, they were brand new, and we had to -- they were brand new. We -- yes, they were brand new.

**Timothy Naftali**

The Air Force One, how many places did you have to refuel to get to China? Did you have to refuel in Hawaii?

**Dwight Chapin**

When Nixon went to --

**Male Speaker**

[inaudible]

**Dwight Chapin**

I'm playing with the cup, right?

**Male Speaker**

Yeah.

**Dwight Chapin**

Air Force One, when it went to China, went to Elmendorf Air Force Base -- no, pardon me. We went from Washington, D.C., to Honolulu, from Honolulu to Guam, and from Guam into Shanghai, and then on into Beijing. The reason for that track was, we spent two nights in Hawaii and one night in Guam for time change reasons, to get the President acclimated, and then we went on in. But they became the refueling stops. And then on the way back, we left from Shanghai Communiqué and so forth. We left after that flew to Elmendorf Air Force Base in Alaska and then into Washington.

**Timothy Naftali**

President -- the Secret Service usually likes to control how the President eats when he's traveling, I assume.

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes.

**Timothy Naftali**

The Chinese, of course, were not accustomed to that.

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes.

**Timothy Naftali**

They're also great cooks.

**Dwight Chapin**

Fantastic cooks.

**Timothy Naftali**

This must have introduced some trouble, some challenges.

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, I'm not quite certain how they sorted all that out, because it was not under my wing, but I'm sure that they were in the kitchen, and they were watching everything that was put on the plate for the President. And anything that -- probably when the plates came out, there would be a plate for Zhou Enlai and a plate for Nixon, and you wouldn't know which was going to get that plate. It'd be an easy way to solve the problem.

**Timothy Naftali**

Indeed. What were some of the challenges, besides the studio issue?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, the challenge -- the main challenge when we first went over there in October, and you're driving into town and there are these big posters, "red dog," you know, "United States Dogs of Capitalism." I mean, all of this anti-America propaganda and so forth. And so you're getting this feeling of, this adversary of this -- I mean, they just, it was like, how are we ever going to get through to these people, you know? But the person that made it work was Zhou Enlai. I mean, it was his gracefulness. And I know there are many people historically that say, well, Mao and Zhou Enlai and their long march and so forth and they killed, you know, all of these hundreds of thousands of people, millions of people, and so forth. But I mean, we didn't experience any of that. We experienced a gracefulness and a desire to make things work out. I always say that the China trip was much easier than the Russia trip. The

China trip -- in China, when they said something it would happen the way that they said it would. In Russia, they would say something and lie to you, and it was a real problem to have it work out. But I found that, in China, you know, we had to overcome a lot of things. I mean, just housing, where are all of these people going to stay? What are motorcades going to be? Whose airplanes are we going to use? What kind of motorcades? Should we bring our own cars? You know, where will the meetings be? You know, how many cities are we going to visit? I mean, it was endless, the number of things that had to be decided and worked out, and then, logistically, to be moving all of this large number of people around. I mean, that was the challenge and those were the issues, kind of.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did the President -- now, you've mentioned the President wanted to have a small plane and, in the end, that couldn't be the case.

**Male Speaker**

One second, I apologize.

**Timothy Naftali**

That's all right.

**Male Speaker**

There we go.

**Timothy Naftali**

You mentioned that the President had an idea of having a small plane and that couldn't work out. Did he have a sense of how long he wanted this trip to be?

**Dwight Chapin**

I believe -- my recollection on that was that he wanted it to be like three or four days, and that got elongated. I mean, everything got bigger, longer, bigger, the whole thing. I think when it first started out, he wanted to keep it more confined. And the political issue was significant in that there was the conservative block in America who were not for this. I mean, they hate red China. They didn't want to see the President going over there and even talking to these people. So he was trying to figure out how to manage the political side of it, as well as, you know, not going too gaga, if you will, over the Chinese. In other words, the Chinese -- but the Chinese kept asking for things, and I think they wanted him there for more days. It was in their interest to start showing this opening thing, they -- it was very calculated on their part, and it was very calculated on our part.

**Timothy Naftali**

I've seen the photographs. There are some beautiful photographs of Air Force One landing with a Chinese reception. What were some of the images that you wanted to send back to the United States? You were talking about how this was a very sophisticated advance operation on your part.

**Dwight Chapin**

Right, the real significance of China was in the timing, because you basically have a 12-hour difference. So when we were getting up in the morning and starting something, people at home would just be -- it would be nighttime. So when we want to go out to the Great Wall of China and have satellite feeds of that in the morning, it's going to be seen in prime time nightly news or nighttime specials. And the networks had prime time specials of all of this. In the evening, when we were doing the banquets and so forth, or going to sporting shows or whatever it might be, we would have the morning news shows, you know, the "Today" show, the ABC show, you name it. But we had all of this figured out ahead of time, all of the itineraries. So we maximized our use of it and the exposure of the President in any number of different situations. When he wasn't available, we used Mrs. Nixon. And she, for that trip, had taken -- and most people would remember this that were old enough -- she wore a beautiful red coat, and against the drabness of China, the red coat just popped out, and it spoke volumes about America, just in a very subliminal way. Then we also worked in there -- we had the substantive meetings, but that would be pool footage and so forth. But that was thought through also.

**Timothy Naftali**

So the red coat was a deliberate decision.

**Dwight Chapin**

Definitely, yes.

**Timothy Naftali**

So to just --

**Dwight Chapin**

I think it was Tex McCrary's idea. I don't know if you've heard of him yet, but Tex is very -- one of the great PR men of all time. When he started off one of the young men that worked for him was Bill Safire, and then a young lady that worked for him was Barbara Walters, and on and on and on of people he trained.

**Timothy Naftali**

And he was a consultant?

**Dwight Chapin**

He was a consultant, and he had fantastic ideas. It was Tex's idea. Tex sent me a message on the plane when we were flying from Moscow to Iran, back in '72. He had an idea, and his idea was that, when Nixon returned, he'd land at Andrews, helicopter to the Capitol, and address the Congress. And that is exactly what we did, and it was one of the most dramatic pieces of footage you will ever see of this helicopter at nighttime coming into the Capitol and then the President walking from the helicopter in and addressing Congress about his trip to Moscow. And that was Tex's idea.

**Timothy Naftali**

Tell us about the Chapin cameras. You brought a camera with yourself. You brought a camera to China.

**Dwight Chapin**

I did. I took a camera on all my trips to China.

**Timothy Naftali**

What kind of camera?

**Dwight Chapin**

A Canon movie camera, Super 8, and I have quite a collection of film from that trip. And when it was all over I put it together into a movie and was invited by several different groups of friends to come show them about China, because this was something that people had never seen before, and there's some very unique footage. There's some of the footage of President Nixon and Zhou Enlai on a Chinese aircraft conferring --

**Timothy Naftali**

Let's talk about --

**Dwight Chapin**

Just inside shots. Kissinger and Winston Lord playing ping pong and things like that.

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, let's talk -- because I'd like to show the Nixon-Zhou film, and so perhaps you could narrate it for us. Where are they flying? What are they flying?

**Dwight Chapin**

Oh, my word. We are on a Chinese aircraft. We are flying between Beijing and Hangchow, and they are using these little Chinese green tea cups with the lids on it. And the steam is coming off of it and so forth. And they're having, I would call a social occasion and not a hardcore negotiating session or meeting. And on the plane are selected members of the American delegation and Chinese members of the delegation. Air Force One flew down adjacent to -- or immediately afterwards, and the bulk of our staff were on that plane, and also on the press plane. So it was a very limited number of people on the Chinese aircraft. There was tremendous give and take back and forth, because the Secret Service was furious about the decision to use the Chinese aircraft. But the President felt that we could rely on the Chinese ensuring that their prime minister was safe, and if their prime minister was safe, he was going to be safe.

**Timothy Naftali**

How was Zhou's English? Did he speak any English?

**Dwight Chapin**

A few words. He definitely understood it. I mean, he would understand it. But he would speak in Chinese, but you know that he understood what you were saying before it was translated.

**Timothy Naftali**

Before you got there, you weren't sure that the President would see Mao, or did you know --

**Dwight Chapin**

We were -- I believe that Kissinger and Haig had both been told that Mao would be seen. Nobody knew when. That was the key issue. And we arrived in Beijing. We immediately went to a guest house where the President was staying. Upon arrival at the guest house, we assembled in a big parlor room with chairs lining around the walls, and the prime minister and President talked back and forth. And that probably lasted, oh, 15 or 20 minutes before Zhou Enlai said he was leaving departed. Nixon went to his room. Everybody started getting into the swing of things, started putting away their clothes and all of that. And Han Xu, who was the chief of protocol and my counterpart, arrived with Zhou Enlai out of the blue, I mean, this was like an hour and a half later, and said that they would like to get the President, that they wanted to go meet with Chairman Mao. I went and found Haldeman, said that they were here, the prime minister was standing out in the entry room with Ambassador Han, and that they wanted the President to go. So we got the President up and going, and he was just in his shirt sleeves in his room, and they left within four or five minutes off to see Chairman Mao. And it was a very, very restricted group of people. Secretary Rogers, Secretary of State Rogers, was not advised of this. I mean, it was kept very confidential until they got back.

**Timothy Naftali**

What were your duties in China?

**Dwight Chapin**

On the China trip, my duties -- I was like the acting chief of protocol. Bus Mosbacher from the State Department, who was our chief of protocol, was not a part of the Nixon China trips. So my role was to coordinate all of the advance logistical type things with the Chinese, and my counterpart, their chief of protocol, was Ambassador Han Xu.

**Timothy Naftali**

Besides the Mao meeting, what surprises do you remember from the trip? Because there are always surprises.

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes, well, I think that the thing that I remember that was the most tension-driven part of it -- let me go there -- was the getting ready for the China -- for the Shanghai Communiqué. And the right wing back in the United States was very concerned about where this Communiqué might go. Pat Buchanan, who had a view that paralleled the more right wing view, was worried about language in the document. And Kissinger and Haig, who had worked on the document, of course they thought that it said what needed to be said and were upset that Pat was not pleased with it. Pat had talked to Rose Mary Woods, and Rose got into it, and Rose is pissed off. And so, I mean, this thing kind of built, and Haldeman is trying to keep everybody kind of settled down on the issue. Nixon is very uptight about it. And it was probably the most stressful part of the whole China trip, and it happened right before this -- like the day before this Communiqué was to be released.

[in audio]

**Dwight Chapin**

-- magazine ran this picture of Zhou Enlai, and Henry is on his right, and I'm on Zhou's left and it said, "Henry Kissinger and aide." So when Henry did the deal to me he says, you know, "the only aide that ever survived." But I got along very well with him and so forth, but he needs to spend much more than an hour --

**Male Speaker**

[inaudible]

**Timothy Naftali**

So you remembered this moment of great tension before the Shanghai Communiqué?

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes, yes, yes, yes. But it was this -- I think Bill Buckley was speaking out on this back home. It was a right wing/left wing, you know, where's Nixon? Nixon, the centrist, is in a movement to the left and --

**Timothy Naftali**

What was he? In a sense where was he on this?

**Dwight Chapin**

I think Nixon was trying to come up with -- again, I'm not on the subject -- Nixon was trying to come up with something that would allow for the opening up of this relationship with China while at the same time keep countering the Soviet influence and trying to get the Chinese to help with the problem in Vietnam.

**Timothy Naftali**

Now let's go to the Soviets. What was it like to advance that trip?

**Dwight Chapin**

The Soviet trip was, in many ways, much more difficult, only because the people are more difficult to deal with over there. But it was a trip that balanced out the China trip. It didn't have the degree of historicness to it, but it was a very successful trip.

**Timothy Naftali**

Nixon had been to Russia before --

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes.

**Timothy Naftali**

What were his expectations? And again, you told me what he thought about the trip to China and how long it would be. What did he want from -- what instructions did you get as an advance man for this trip?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, the thing that was most unusual about the China trip -- pardon me, let me start over. The thing that was most unusual about the Russian trip was how it all began. Because we went over there as an advance party, and Brent Scowcroft was our lead substantive guy. So we get there, and we meet with the United States ambassador, and we are working out the arrangements with the Russians as to how everything's going to work. We're figuring out what's going to happen at the Kremlin and rooming assignments -- all of the kinds of logistical stuff that you have to go through. What cities we'd visit: Kiev was one, Saint Petersburg was another. So we're doing the arrangements. We leave to go to Iran, and upon arriving in Iran, we find out that Kissinger had flown into Russia while we were there. We did not know it, nor did the American ambassador. And Kissinger was in there negotiating on some details that had to do with the forthcoming trip, and that was released after we had left the country. So, I mean, it was kind of a -- you know, I can remember arriving back home and saying, you know, what the hell is going on here? It's kind of embarrassing for us not to know that Henry is there, you know, doing this, let alone how the American ambassador feels.

**Timothy Naftali**

Whose idea was it for Nixon to visit the tomb -- the war memorial?

**Dwight Chapin**

Tanya.

**Timothy Naftali**

Yeah.

**Dwight Chapin**

To go out to the graveyard was, I believe, a Soviet idea, and they took us there. And then the minute we saw it and we found that Tanya, the book, the story, and so forth, we knew that this was something that he should do. And it was just -- it's mind-boggling. Have you been out there? I mean --

**Timothy Naftali**

No, but I know that it played an important role in the speech that he --

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes.

**Timothy Naftali**

-- gave to the Russian people.

**Dwight Chapin**

The other thing that happened before the speech to the Russian people, there was an incident, and I don't know whether it's been written about, where we had a fight that some of our people wanted to be in -- like Ollie Atkins, who was the official White House photographer -- and I think it was a sound guy or something -- but they wanted to be in the room, and the President always expected them to be. I mean, this was not something abnormal. And the Soviets decided that they wouldn't be in there, and it was pushing and shoving, and then it was fist fights. I mean, like two minutes before he was supposed to go on the air, I mean, this thing is happening right there, and the President's getting ready to go on the air. This is exactly the kind of thing we'd want to avoid in the advance man's manual, by the way. But I mean this is the, or it was at the time, the Russian way of doing things. Very, I want to use the word thuggish. I mean, they're just so heavy-handed.

**Timothy Naftali**

And who was doing the fighting? American --

**Dwight Chapin**

Well yeah, the sound guy and Ollie. I mean, Ollie was trying to protect himself. They're grabbing him and dragging him, and he's just a very nice guy, photographer. It was just very disturbing for us and for the host. I mean, it just was a very awkward incident, but anyway.

**Timothy Naftali**

Let's go back to the campaign. I need to ask you about Donald Segretti.

**Dwight Chapin**

Sure.

**Timothy Naftali**

You were very busy -- you're advancing these trips. What role does that -- does the dirty tricks business play in your work?

**Dwight Chapin**

Right, right, very good. Dick Tuck was a prankster who had done tricks on Republican candidates over the years, tricks being crazy little things, nothing harmful. One day, the buzzer goes off, and I go into the President's office, and he's sitting there with Haldeman and they say, "Do you know," -- by they, Bob says it -- and the President's sitting there -- "Do you know anyone that can do Dick Tuck type stuff? We should have somebody like that." And I said, "Well, let me think about it." So I went out and I thought about it, and I thought of Don Segretti. Don had been a roommate at USC, he was just leaving the judge advocate's position in the military, in the Army, and I thought, Don, okay. Don is very anonymous, would fit in, and could do this kind of thing. So I talked with Don, and he was interested in doing it. And I arranged through Herb Kalmbach for him to be paid, and I put it in motion with very little guidance, because I was incredibly busy, and I had all kinds of obligations. And Don marched off. I gave him some direction -- to the life of me, I can't remember specifically what direction. The one thing that saved my hide, in one sense, is that when Don went to a grand jury and they asked him about his activities, he said, "When Dwight hired me, Dwight said, 'One of the reasons I am hiring you is because you are a lawyer and you'll know what's right and what's wrong.'" And when Don said that, it made it impossible for them to later indict me for anything that he had done. Don remembers my saying that. I really don't remember that statement, but he says that's what I said. What happened was that he went out and he did all of these pranks, some of which crossed a line and were not tolerable in our political system, should not have been done. The classic being a very negative piece on Shirley Chisholm, who was a black congresswoman from New York, and he made ethnic slurs and so forth in this document. But I -- and he would send me copies of things, but many times I wouldn't even open this stuff. I mean, it piled up at our house, but I wouldn't even get into it, because I just didn't have the time. And that was my downfall. I mean, maybe I could have redirected it. It's so many years later, it's hard to remember all the specifics of it. But I was indicted for making false statements to a grand jury, not for any of his actions. But when they, for example, asked me about the Shirley Chisholm document and whether I recalled, I said, "Not that I recall. I don't recall this." And I was indicted for some counts of not recalling and not being specific. The prosecutor's translation of that was that I was misleading and making false statements, and they proved that in court by having the document and saying to a jury, "How could anybody not remember this?" And, of course, had I seen it or had I really focused on it, there was no way not to remember it, but I didn't remember it. So I got convicted by the grand jury, and then I appealed all the way to the Supreme Court. They wouldn't hear my case, so I went to Lompoc for a sentence of -- I spent nine months.

**Timothy Naftali**

Segretti did all of this without any -- I mean, he was not getting any instructions, sort of -- I mean --

**Dwight Chapin**

No, no. I talked to him on the phone periodically. We met a few times. I gave him some ideas. I gave him -- I aimed him. I aimed him at Muskie, I aimed him at -- who else would it have been in that year? Humphrey. But not -- but then he was going to -- he went and innovated and did whatever he did. I didn't get into the nitty-gritty of, you know, the execution of how this stuff worked.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did Haldeman explain to you why the President wanted this done?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, you know, I never questioned this because, to me, Dick Tuck had always been -- this had been part of what I'd grown up with. I mean, so their request to have a Dick Tuck type guy was not that insane of an idea. Now, you can look at it and say, you mean to tell me the President of the United States is sitting in his office with his chief of staff and you're coming in there and they're talking about dirty tricks stuff and there's a Vietnam War and why the hell aren't they running the war and why are they focused on this stuff? Can't answer that. I mean, we had all been in campaigns. Nixon had always had this little rinky-dink crap pulled on him. I don't know what prompted it that made them buzz me in there, but I went in, that's what they asked me to do, and that's what I did. It's not a good excuse, but that's what I did.

**Timothy Naftali**

You didn't do it in '68, though? I mean, did anyone do this --

**Dwight Chapin**

I have no idea. In '68 I wasn't asked to go find a Dick Tuck. And my responsibilities -- you've got to keep in mind now that I'm older and I have been around a while and so, you know, they may have asked somebody else to do it in '68, I don't know.

**Timothy Naftali**

Why did they want Herb Kalmbach to pay for it?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well it had to be paid for by somebody, and Herb was a person who was involved on the money side of things. And I'm not sure, I'm not sure why I called Herb. It may have been Bob said, you know, get in touch with Herb, I don't know. But Herb's the one I called, Herb is the one I turned it over to.

**Timothy Naftali**

Was this before the Committee to Re-elect the President was established?

**Dwight Chapin**

What year -- well, what year was -- or what timeframe was it established? This happened -- I would have to -- I don't know when this happened with them asking me, but it seems to me that that would have been in the pre-China trip stuff. So this is going to be either late '71 or the very first part of '72, when Segretti's hired. And CREEP was created in '72, early probably, so it's probably very simultaneous.

**Timothy Naftali**

I'm just surprised that they didn't ask CREEP to do this.

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, if they had asked CREEP to do it, it would have been much worse than just asking me. That way CREEP's reputation or they way they did the --

**Timothy Naftali**

All I'm saying is to get the White House involved in this.

**Dwight Chapin**

Yeah.

**Timothy Naftali**

Now, why did you think of Segretti?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, I trusted Don, and I knew him from my USC days, and I knew that he would be -- I thought he would be good at this.

**Timothy Naftali**

Was he a prankster at USC?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, but he was smart and he was clever and he would be -- he would just be good.

**Timothy Naftali**

And what are we talking about? We're talking -- I mean, you mentioned the Shirley Chisholm letter, but what letters to the candidate -- did it also involve --

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, he'd call and order 500 pizzas to be delivered for the so-and-so rally for the food and he would have things under the door of traveling parties saying, "Have your bags out at 6:00 in the morning," and they weren't supposed to be out until 10:00 in the morning or something. I mean, it would be just crazy stuff. I mean, it is so inconsequential. The ramifications of what happened aren't, but I mean the impact of it was zero.

**Timothy Naftali**

How did Segretti's name get to the press?

**Dwight Chapin**

My understanding is that Woodward and Bernstein are the ones that came across him in October of 1972. In looking into some stuff, they found this name, Segretti, or a credit card receipt or whatever, and they just started working their way through it and exposed him.

**Timothy Naftali**

Let's talk about the Watergate

-in. Let me ask you, did you know anything about those operations?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, I want to tell you something that I think is historically very important. And that is that the weekend of the Watergate break-in -- it happened on a Saturday night, right?

**Timothy Naftali**

Uh-huh.

**Dwight Chapin**

Okay, there was guy, Gerard Smith, the arms control negotiator. His daughter, Sheila, was having her 30th birthday party over on the Eastern Shore, and we were there for her party. And my good friend Henry Cashen, who worked for Chuck Colson, and I were with our wives, and we drove back to this inn where we were staying. There was a message to call Haldeman urgently. This is like 1:30, 2:00 in the morning. So I called Bob, and he says, "Do you know anything about any plan to do something to the Democratic Committee over at the Watergate?" I said, "I have no idea what you're talking about." He says, "You've never heard anything about this, nothing?" I said, "No, sir, I have not one thing." He said, "Okay then, goodnight," and that was the end of it. My point is that Bob knew -- he was trying to figure out what the hell was going on the night right after this had happened or whenever. I may be a little off on whether it was 2:00 in the morning or 2:30 in the morning or whatever. I'm sure the White House log will show it, because I called through the switchboard. But he's trying to figure out what happened. In terms of any pre-knowledge of any kind on his part, there was none. I am convinced of it, because of that story.

**Timothy Naftali**

To what extent did you pick up the reaction of Haldeman and the President in the days that followed? Once the President comes back from Key Biscayne --

**Dwight Chapin**

I didn't. I mean, it was not even on my radar screen. I mean, we were off and running on whatever we were working on and so forth, and, I mean, it was so confined right there with them and not affecting me whatsoever. I mean, I just didn't know.

**Timothy Naftali**

When does it get onto your radar screen?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, as it -- I don't know the exact -- I mean, I'm making this up. I mean, I don't know when it got on my radar.

**Timothy Naftali**

Okay, okay.

**Dwight Chapin**

I mean, it would be -- yeah.

**Timothy Naftali**

Don't make it up. But you do know there's a problem when Segretti's name gets involved?

**Dwight Chapin**

Oh, you better tell me that there's a problem. Because, see, he -- the name of the game wasn't to get to Dwight Chapin. The name of the game was to get to Richard Nixon. And I'm just a pawn in the process, part of a battering ram to get in the White House. And we made a very, very bad decision in hiring Don Segretti to do tricks on Democratic -- dirty tricks on Democratic contenders. It was wrong, and it absolutely should not have been done. It was done, and it became, you know, among other things, a way to undermine confidence in the White House and to create this suspicion of bigger fish to be fried.

**Timothy Naftali**

My sense from what you've said is that you were too busy to know that it was wrong? I mean, during this period --

**Dwight Chapin**

No.

**Timothy Naftali**

-- when Segretti was doing what he was doing was --

**Dwight Chapin**

I didn't focus on it, Tim; I had no idea. I didn't say, "Dwight, is this right or is this wrong?" One of the most interesting things that happened to me a few years later is I went down to Texas to see some friends, and this pal of mine said, "You've got to go meet this guy. He wants to have lunch with you. His name's Roger Staubach, and he was a quarterback, and he was at the Naval Academy." And he said, "Dwight," he said, "You know, we're at the Naval Academy at the time you were going through all of this. I was there." And he says, "And I'm trying to figure out what I would do if the President of the United States called me in and gave me an instruction. Would I do it or not do it?" And, you know, in retrospect, now I would say, you know, "Mr. President, I don't think it's a good idea to hire Don Segretti to go do dirty tricks." Or hire somebody to do the Dick Tuck tricks. I mean, that's common sense right now. At that moment in time, it didn't even enter -- I mean, God only knows. They buzzed me in. I don't even remember what I was doing before the buzzer went off. I mean, does it make it right? No. But, I mean, I have, you know -- I did what I did.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did the President say anything when Haldeman spoke to you and asked you to do this?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, probably, you know, the Dick Tuck type stuff. I mean, he mumbled something. I mean, you've been listening to tapes, you know how -- "We need to have somebody to do this kind of stuff." I don't really remember what he said, but he was there and he participated in the conversation. He heard it clearly and nodded or whatever he did.

**Timothy Naftali**

Again, you were busy afterwards, but did Haldeman check up on this? Did he ever ask you --

**Dwight Chapin**

No, not at all, ever. Haldeman was clueless as to what anything that Don did, to my knowledge.

**Timothy Naftali**

And same with the President -- and the President never asked?

**Dwight Chapin**

Never asked.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did anybody ask you about it?

**Dwight Chapin**

No. The guy's off; he's a launched missile. He's out there, and nobody knows.

**Timothy Naftali**

This is a hard thing for people to understand, I believe, you have a very well-oiled machine --

**Dwight Chapin**

Right.

**Timothy Naftali**

[unintelligible]

**Dwight Chapin**

Yeah.

**Timothy Naftali**

Everything is no surprises; you don't want surprises.

**Dwight Chapin**

Right.

**Timothy Naftali**

You just launched a missile.

**Dwight Chapin**

Exactly.

**Timothy Naftali**

Try to explain where that fits into this.

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, that's a good -- that's a very good question, and it doesn't. It completely goes against the grain of our operation. And, you know, I guess it was incumbent upon me if Don digressed and got into some area that he shouldn't be in, to have reigned him back and kept him where he should -- you know, within some boundaries. Though boundaries weren't set. If they were set, it was my comment to him that I don't recall where I say -- where he says I say it, you know, "Dwight said do what's right and what's wrong. You'll know the difference." I mean, I really didn't spend time on it. And, I mean, it sounds foolish and dumb, and it was, but I didn't.

**Timothy Naftali**

What were you doing during the campaign, I mean, with most of your time? You've come back from China --

**Dwight Chapin**

Oh.

**Timothy Naftali**

-- you've come back from the Soviet Union --

**Dwight Chapin**

Oh, my God!

**Timothy Naftali**

It's the summer of 1972. What are you doing?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, I'm involved in all of the scheduling for the President, the Vice President; all of the surrogates were meeting constantly, meeting with CREEP. We've got the convention coming up. We have the -- I was on the committee that put together all of the -- with Peter Daley and the group that put together all -- Phil Joanou -- that put together the advertising and all of that. We attended to all of those meetings. I mean, I'm in charge of the television office. I'm running -- I'm into my world of campaigning and not into my world of what's Segretti doing? It's just not a priority.

**Timothy Naftali**

Who comes up with the idea of "Nixon's the One"?

**Dwight Chapin**

I don't remember.

**Timothy Naftali**

When were you sure that the President was going to be reelected?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, I mean, as the campaign moved along, probably in, I guess, the Democratic Convention would be one of the keys.

**Male Speaker**

If you could start that question over. I'm sorry, sir.

**Dwight Chapin**

That bird?

**Male Speaker**

Car alarm or something.

**Dwight Chapin**

When was I sure --

**Male Speaker**

Go ahead.

**Dwight Chapin**

When was I sure the President was going to be reelected?

**Timothy Naftali**

When --

**Dwight Chapin**

The Democratic Convention would have been a key point.

**Timothy Naftali**

Let's talk about --

**Male Speaker**

We're clear.

**Timothy Naftali**

Okay. Election day. So you went on vacation after the election?

**Dwight Chapin**

I did.

**Timothy Naftali**

In '72.

**Dwight Chapin**

I did. The election was -- actually, I'm going to run through this whole process, because there's some interesting things here, I think. The election was held. The next morning we had a meeting in the Roosevelt Room, where Bob Haldeman -- the President came in, thanked everybody and so forth, he left, and Bob Haldeman asked for everybody's resignations. Rather famous meeting. I was really pissed. I didn't think that this was appropriate. I thought it was very just so de-motivating to everybody. So we wrote our resignations. I left a couple of days later for Ireland for three weeks. That's a long time to be gone from the White House. We went with two other couples. I came back. The plane landed at Andrews in the afternoon. The men came back on a military plane, the women came back commercial. Went to the White House, walked in, it was a Sunday, I was going to look through my mail. The phone rings, it's John Dean, and John says, "How was your trip to Ireland?" I said, "Fine." Keep in mind now, I didn't call anybody. He's tracking me, evidently, because he knows exactly when that car delivered me to the White House. So he said, "Can I come by and see you in the morning?" I said, "Yes." So he came by the next morning and he said, "Have you given any thought to what you are going to do next?" And I said, "John, what in the world are you trying to tell me?" And he said, "Well, I think you need to figure out what you're going to do next." And I said, "Does Bob know this?" And he said, "Bob asked me to talk to you." I could not believe it. I went over to Richard Moore's office. Unbeknownst to me, until the Haldeman diaries came out, Moore knew all of this, but he acted like he didn't. So I go to this older mentor, Richard Moore, and I said, "What is going on here?" He says, "I don't know." And I said, "Well." I went back to my office and I called Haldeman, he was at Camp David, and I said, "Bob, do you want to talk to me?" And he says, "I think we need to talk." He says, "Can you come up tomorrow?" So now I've got to wait until the next day. I mean, this is -- you know, I'm shook to my core and I've got to wait 24 hours. So the next day I get on a helicopter at the Pentagon pad with Jerry Ford, which I thought was kind of interesting, and flew up to Camp David. And Bob met me, and we went over to one of the cabins and talked, and we were both crying. He was crying, and he said that it looked like I was going to be a political problem to the President because of all this Segretti stuff; Colson was a problem because of some of this stuff, and this guy, Sam Irvin, may hold some hearings, and therefore, it's probably better for your career and everything else if you move on. I mean, it was just horrible. There's nothing that can describe how I felt. So I sucked it up, said, "Yes, sir," went into the men's room to get myself kind of straightened up, and there is the Attorney General of the United States, Richard Kleindienst, bawling like a baby. He had just met with Ehrlichman. I'm thinking to myself, "This thing's surreal. I mean, I can't believe this!" So I went back, got on the helicopter, and went back and started figuring out my life and where I was going to go. And I went on to United Airlines, but it was a very, very tough time. And I was very fortunate that the men

-- that they took and cut the losses and let me go, although in retrospect there were a hell of a lot of other people that should've gone before me, in my opinion. But the one thing it allowed was for me to get away from Washington and out to Chicago and out of that environment for basically my own good and my family's good.

**Male Speaker**

Stop there to change the tape.

[in audio]

**Timothy Naftali**

-- Bush one?

**Dwight Chapin**

Bush one.

**Timothy Naftali**

Bush one.

**Dwight Chapin**

He's a great guy. He's Edward Bennett Williams' lawyer, that's how good he is. That was what prompted me, was that, you know, when you said Edward Bennett Williams, he picked Terry to do his estate.

**Timothy Naftali**

Before we move to your leaving Washington, I want to talk on two questions. First of all, did you have any warning when the Segretti material got into "The Washington Post"?

**Dwight Chapin**

None.

**Timothy Naftali**

I think it was "The Post." Okay, tell us about --

**Dwight Chapin**

It ran on -- pardon me, I did have a warning. Yes, I knew it was coming. They had called Ziegler or something for a statement. I did have a warning, because I went that Saturday night, Susie and I, went to Dick Moore's house, and I talked it over with Dick Moore, and we got the early edition of "The Washington Post," which came out around 11:30 or something on Saturday evening. And we read the

story and, you know, it was a front-page, right-hand column story. Then we went home, and then the next day, we left our house very early in the morning, and we went back to the Moores'. And Dick and I went into the White House and met with Ehrlichman and Ziegler -- I think John Dean was there, I'm not certain -- and tried to figure out how we were going to manage this, how we were going to handle it. We wrote out some statements. Then Sunday night, we went back to the Moores' house, had dinner, and then -- I'm telling this for a reason -- we went home, we drove in our driveway, we're working our way up to the front door and I hear this, "Psst, psst, Dwight, Dwight," and this guy comes out from behind a tree. And I had known him for years through the campaign. It was Bob Semple of "The New York Times" hiding behind a tree in our front yard. I said, "Bob, good God!" I said, "What'd they send a friend here to do this?" And he said, "Oh," he says, "I am so embarrassed." And he said, "I just hate being here." But I mean, that's how it all got started and --

**Timothy Naftali**

Did Segretti call you?

**Dwight Chapin**

I don't remember. I don't think so. You ought to talk to him; he's right there, I mean, in California. He may remember; I don't remember. I mean, I was too focused on me.

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, what did they -- what was the plan for you? What was the game plan?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, now, it depends on where you're talking. You know, we have the story, which I want to say was, like, October 19th or 20th, in that range, I don't remember. So we're coming right up on an election, and so it's going to get really hyped coming into this, because if it can do any damage. So there's that period up until when we wrote out our resignations, then I go over to Ireland, and then I come back, and I'm off. So, I mean, I don't know --

**Timothy Naftali**

Let's talk about the October period first, before the election.

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, it was just survival. I mean, it's hanging out there. Every day there are questions on it to Ziegler. I basically went incognito. I mean, I would just would go into the White House, go to my office and leave and go home and didn't go anywhere publicly or -- my habit was always to go walk the Ellipse every day at noon. You know, I'd see press and everything, and I quit doing all that. And I just remember just withdrawing, just -- people would start looking at you suspiciously at, you know -- I now am so much older and, I think, wiser, and I know when these kinds of things happen in Washington, one should know that's getting close to curtains. But I didn't even think of it that way. I thought, well, we'll get through this. And, of course, you have to keep in mind I knew nothing about all of the other Watergate stuff. I was never called to a Watergate grand jury. I was called to a grand jury

on my thing, but nothing to do with the main thing or anything, ever. So, I mean, all of that was happening and I was clueless. Clueless.

**Timothy Naftali**

Then when you were fired with everybody amid that meeting in the Roosevelt Room, did you talk to Haldeman afterwards to say --

**Dwight Chapin**

No, the meeting -- you mean when I went up to Camp David? What meeting in the --

**Timothy Naftali**

I mean the day after the election.

**Dwight Chapin**

The day after the election was when -- no, the day -- no, I didn't -- I wasn't -- that's when we all wrote out our resignations.

**Timothy Naftali**

That's right, and then Camp David's where he accepted it?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, Camp David's when he said, "I think you need to be going on."

**Timothy Naftali**

That's a little -- that's after --

**Dwight Chapin**

That's after the trip to Ireland.

**Timothy Naftali**

But when you handed in your resignation you didn't expect it to be accepted?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, good God, no, the furthest thing from my mind.

**Timothy Naftali**

And Haldeman, did you talk to him about that episode at all?

**Dwight Chapin**

No. Well, I told him how dumb I thought it was at some point. I mean Fred Malek and Larry Higby and, I mean, I don't know who came up with this crazy-ass thing, but it was one of the stupidest things that was ever done, in my opinion.

**Timothy Naftali**

Then you --

**Dwight Chapin**

And plenty of people agree with me.

**Timothy Naftali**

You go away to Ireland not thinking your job was in jeopardy.

**Dwight Chapin**

No.

**Timothy Naftali**

The Segretti thing, has it gone away? I mean what --

**Dwight Chapin**

No, what happened was while I was in Ireland John Dean went and met with Segretti and debriefed him, came back and reported to Haldeman and Dick Moore, and they start realizing that this guy's out there running around. Maybe they found out that I had absolutely no control over him and that I was a dereliction to duty, I don't know. But in any case, they came to a conclusion that one of the things to do was to take Chapin out of the mix coming into this, you know, into the new administration to try to -- as Bob put it, to try to head off Sam Irvin doing some hearings. And in retrospect, they were focused on the wrong guy. I mean, I probably should have gone because of what I did. I don't, you know, but it seems to me that there -- now what we know, there was some much more severe things that needed to be addressed.

**Timothy Naftali**

You -- there's a grand jury. Did John Dean talk to you before you went into the grand jury?

**Dwight Chapin**

That's the Eddie Carlson part of the story, where I mentioned that I said that John Dean was my attorney, and the guy who was running United Airlines says, "Not anymore, we're going to get you a lawyer." I mean, he was smart enough to know this was not right.

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, what was John Dean telling you during --

**Dwight Chapin**

Oh, he was telling me that things would work out, that he was keeping abreast of what was going on with me. I think kind of trying to keep track of where I was and what were my feelings, and, I mean, it's a very typical type thing when somebody's under the gun to say, well, you know, what's their temperament, what's going on here? I mean, is Dwight off talking to the prosecutors? I mean, what's going on here? And of course, the picture is so much more complex than I know. I think John's being a nice guy, he's, you know, in touch with me and so forth. When -- oh, I've left this out and it's probably very important. When the story appeared in the paper on that Sunday, then Monday or Tuesday the FBI came to the White House, and they met with me in John Dean's office. John left and didn't stay in the room. He had Fred Fielding stay in the room. Fred's current White House Counsel, great guy. So Fred is in the room, and it's me and these FBI agents, young guys, are asking me these questions. I answer everything truthfully, that's how I was raised. I told them everything, everything that I could possibly think of on this thing. They leave. The next day it's on the front page of "The Washington Post." They come back for some follow-up questions, the FBI agents. First thing they do is they start off and they apologize to me for that being on the front page of the paper and say they have no idea how it happened. And, of course, now we know, through Mark Felt. They went back there, and however that information was disseminated within the FBI Headquarters, he got some of it and gave it to the reporters. But they were furious, and, of course, I was just madder than hell, because I had spilled everything to them. I mean, I told them everything I could possibly think of on this thing. I mean, I thought that was the answer, was to be forthcoming, and it all ends up on the front page of the paper.

**Timothy Naftali**

When was the last time you saw the President before you went before the grand jury?

**Dwight Chapin**

Oh, probably in March, or it would have been in April of 1973. So, I was working at the White House, I left at the end of April and went to United Airlines. So it had to have been in that timeframe.

**Timothy Naftali**

And what did he -- I mean, did he say goodbye?

**Dwight Chapin**

Oh, you know him -- I mean, not really. And, you know, after I went to prison, I took my daughters to San Clemente with my wife, and he, you know, it was kind of awkward, but he told the girls that their dad had done a great job for him and that I had done important things, worked with the country and so forth. But it was -- you know he's just, he's not acclimated to -- I mean, I've been with him so many times under these conditions, you know, when we're dealing with people who have come in,

something's happened to them or their family or whatever; this is not his strong suit. So, I always felt -- I know he felt very bad about things. I know Haldeman was -- in fact, I just found out recently from Jo Haldeman, who is an incredible resource -- you really should try to talk to her. She told me how upset Bob was from that Camp David meeting with me. And I had never known this until, oh, I don't know, about six months ago, that he really fell apart. He was just devastated that we had to -- that this happened the way it did. And I had never known that.

**Timothy Naftali**

You went to work for United in early '73?

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes.

**Timothy Naftali**

Then the grand jury while you were there.

**Dwight Chapin**

Right.

**Timothy Naftali**

And then the trial.

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes.

**Timothy Naftali**

Tell us about the trial.

**Dwight Chapin**

It started on April the 1st. Jake Stein, my lawyer, who was Monica Lewinsky's lawyer, you might recall. Jake said, "Dwight, it will be over on Friday," he said, because a Washington jury won't fiddle around and doesn't want to come back on Monday, and 5:00 Friday night it was over. It was -- my judge was Judge Gerhard Gesell, a liberal Democrat, Johnson-appointee, and he did not like me. I looked different back then. I was a young man, not too bad looking. I dressed nicely, was probably on the cocky side because that was my defense mechanism or something, I don't know. I've thought -- I don't know what I could have done differently, but there was no way of connecting with that jury. And Jake had told me from the outset that our case probably would be won on appeal, that I shouldn't expect, you know, from the conviction thing. We had a Washington jury, we had Nixon -- I mean, the chemistry was just not right on this. The only thing that was really kind of startling was that the Judge on voir dire asked how many people -- the people to raise their hands that had heard of Watergate, and

he's got 100 people there and maybe three hands went up. And I thought, "Uh oh, what's going on here?" They don't even -- haven't even heard this term. I mean, it's been in the media and these people don't even read newspapers. So it was a sad experience. My family was there. It was just very sad. And of course, I was the first person of all of the "Watergate" thing to ever go to trial because everybody else pled. And I maintained my innocence because -- and the reason I maintained my innocence was that, in my heart of hearts, when I went into that grand jury, I had no intention of lying, no expectation, nothing. I went in to tell the truth. And I got stumbled up over saying, "Not that I recall," and there were a couple of other things, but they're very close to that, "Not to the best of my knowledge," and something. And so I came out of there thinking I had no problem. And Earl Silbert, who was one of the prosecutors -- no, Glanzer, who is in a law firm in New York, or in Washington, says that there was a memorandum written by the Archibald Cox people saying that I was un-indictable. And then the Saturday Night Massacre happened. And after the Saturday Night Massacre, Leon Jaworski came in, and they needed somebody quick, and they pulled out my testimony, they went through that testimony, and I was indicted like within, two weeks. And had the Saturday Night Massacre not happened, I probably would have never been indicted.

**Timothy Naftali**

So, the grand jury is early '73, and then there's a period of six months when it looks like you might not be indicted, because the Saturday Night Massacre is October '73.

**Dwight Chapin**

Right, and I was indicted in November.

**Timothy Naftali**

So, you thought that this might go away?

**Dwight Chapin**

Yeah, because I mean, I just -- it started paling in relationship to everything else. I mean, the dirty tricks thing was just such a amateurish, rinky-dink thing. I mean, was it wrong? Yes. Did Segretti do stuff wrong? Yes, he admitted he did. He took responsibility for it. Did I lie? I didn't think so. Did I try to mislead the grand jury? There was no question -- by the way, when you read the grand jury thing, that I'm evading telling them that Haldeman and Ehrlichman called me in there and told me, when it finally got down to the question and they ask it, I told them. I said, I told them that I had been called in and that they had told me to hire him. But you can see me --

**Timothy Naftali**

[inaudible]

**Dwight Chapin**

Yeah, but you can see me wandering through there trying to not to say that when you read it.

**Timothy Naftali**

Trying not to say that Haldeman and Nixon or Haldeman and Erlichman?

**Dwight Chapin**

Haldeman and Nixon, sorry.

**Timothy Naftali**

Tell us about going to prison.

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, it's not something that you want to do unless you absolutely have to. I had a great piece of advice on the prison thing, and this elderly gentleman who I had started being with and mentoring with said, "Dwight, either it can get the best of you or you can make the most of it." And so I took and I set a schedule, same one I used at the White House. I read more books than I've ever read in my life. I had a daily schedule. I couldn't even hardly keep all the activities squared away. I had my jobs. They wanted to make sure that I was not treated in any way that would be criticized, so they -- when I arrived, they put me on a tractor and they put me out in the field because that was supposed to be punishment, but they didn't know that when I was 12, 13, and 14 I lived in Kansas and I drove a tractor, and I loved it. I was in seventh heaven out on the tractor. Then later they put me in the kitchen, and that worked fine. And I opened a center for helping inmates find jobs when they left, and I ended up kind of doing this little counseling thing, where I'd help them prepare letters and so forth to seek jobs and do stuff. And the calendar kept clicking away. I thought, and I was told, that I probably would be there four months, but again, we're dealing with Gerhard Gesell.

**Timothy Naftali**

Mm-hmm.

**Dwight Chapin**

And I was there nine months, and that was one of the longest of anybody. So, I really got hammered. I got hammered really hard and, I think, disproportionate to what I should have been hammered for. I mean, the fact that we needed to take, the United States needed to take and set an example and say that this kind of behavior would not be tolerated, and I understand that. And I can accept that. But, boy, I'll tell you, by the time we got to the ninth bump, I mean I was ready to tear my hair out. And I really thought I needed to get out of there. The other thing is that you're in there, and there are very nice people involved that work for the government in the prison system. That said, there are always other kinds of people. There was an office, and this guy called this one day he says, "Chapin, Chapin, to the office," so these speakers go off. And I go to the office. And he said, "Well, they missed. It's too bad." I said, "What do you mean?" He said, "Squeaky Fromme just tried to kill President Ford, and she missed." And, I mean, I was so outraged. I mean, I wrote a letter to Dick Ward for him to give to the attorney general, and then Dick called me and said, "Look, Dwight, you know, give up on this thing. Just relax. You've got to get through the process there." But I mean, there were the injustices that I saw

happening there. I always said, later, I wish I'd gone to prison before I went to the White House. I really wish I had gone to prison before I'd gone to the White House, because I saw things and know things and could have, in my little mind, could have done things that would have helped solve some problems.

**Timothy Naftali**

Could you give us some examples?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, I think this whole incarceration thing and how it works and what you do to people. I mean, that you take these young people, and you put them in there, and you collectivify them. And if they've got a drug issue and they're in there and there's more drugs, you're creating an incubator effect rather than separating them out and giving them some kind of halfway house that's clean on the outside and not putting them into these facilities together. I mean, it's endless, it's just -- the system is so screwed up. It doesn't mean, I'm not saying that they're not very smart and wise people trying to work on this problem and people who understand it much better than I do. I'm sure that's true. But there's just so much that needs to get done, and it's so insane to take young men -- we have a lot of young men in their 20s, early 30s, who we were making worse, not better. And we should -- I happen to believe in rehabilitation. I do believe it's possible. I think that people do make mistakes and that they can be -- there are exceptions to that, but --

**Timothy Naftali**

When you got out, were your friends helpful?

**Dwight Chapin**

My friends have been absolutely spectacular. The Nixon people have been absolutely wonderful. I don't know of one Nixon person, other than -- well, I haven't talked to John Dean and I haven't talked to Jeb, but I mean, I was friends with everybody, and I stayed friends with everybody. I loved what I did, and it was very important to me. And I think these friendships just, you know, are golden, and they still exist.

**Timothy Naftali**

Why don't we take a minute?

**Dwight Chapin**

Sorry, I don't mean to -- they're 15, 14-15 years old, and the parents are out of town, and they get a hold of a few cases of beer. And they have a few beers, but they don't have their driver's license yet, but they decide they're going to go take the car and go out and go around the block and come back just for the hell of it, to prove that they could drive. And they start down the alley, and they get halfway down and they hit a trash barrel, and they -- oh, my God. And they back up, and they back into a garage, and then they pull up and they hit a bumper. And by the time they get the car back in the garage, the thing's a goddamn disaster. And that's what Watergate is. I mean, Watergate was some very

nice people, very solid people, with some of the dumbest decisions and doing things imaginable. And it just got worse and worse and worse. Now, I mean, the oversimplification of that, I know, but, I mean, these were not people that were out to rape the country of the democracy or to, you know, that were evil and all this. I just don't buy into that. I don't buy -- even the Nixon move to contain this and to manage it and so forth, I mean, it was just -- had Eisenhower been alive, Dirksen been alive, or Lyndon Johnson been alive, Watergate would have never happened because somebody would have picked up the phone and called him and said, "Dick, what in the world's going on here? You know, here's what you need to do. You've got to separate yourself from these guys. John Mitchell is John Mitchell's problem. Haldeman is Haldeman's problem." Whatever it is and get rid of them. And then the President would have survived.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did you -- you went to see the President after 1974, after his resignation?

**Dwight Chapin**

Several times, well, I mean, by "several," a few times then I'd see him at various occasions and reunions.

**Timothy Naftali**

You mentioned the time you went with the children was awkward, but you said characteristically so. Did you ever talk to him about all of that?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, never, never. I was always -- I'm a "what are we going to do tomorrow?" type guy. I really don't wallow in the past. I don't do this. I mean, I don't -- I am excited about what's going to happen tomorrow, and to wallow back on Watergate or something with the President, I mean, I can't think of anything more uncomfortable than to have said, "Mr. President, I'm here today to see you, and why don't we talk about Watergate? You know, what are your deepest feelings?" You know? I mean, it's just -- the other part is, I mean, I knew him pretty well. I didn't know him well in terms of I'm your friend, you're my friend, but my God, I mean, I was around for years. And I observed, and I went with him, and I knew what he liked, disliked, how he felt about damn near everything. And so, I would know instinctively that raising the subject of Watergate or going into all this is not something that would be appreciated.

**Timothy Naftali**

I mean, were you -- are there some anecdotes or recollections you may have that we haven't gotten to that you'd like to preserve for historical purposes that we haven't touched on?

**Dwight Chapin**

We talked about the Martin Luther King thing, the Humphrey thing, the LBJ deal in Detroit, calling him, the last press conference. Nothing that jumps out right now, Tim.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did you ever see his rage, the President's rage? The public saw it on that day when he pushed Ron Zeigler --

**Dwight Chapin**

Ziegler, that's what's going through my head. I had a black and blue mark once, but it was a crowd situation where they were really pressing in, and he was right next to me, and he grabbed my arm so tightly. I mean, and I don't know whether he was frightened or what. I mean, it was in a campaign atmosphere, but not rage. I mean, I have this calm thing about him. I mean, my job was to try and keep the tempo of everything right on track, and if he got mad, his way of doing it with me would be to say, "Don't you understand?" or "You obviously don't understand." That one really got me because it would be something that I did understand, and he'd say, "You obviously don't understand," when I knew I did understand. But, you know, I mean, but it wasn't rage. No, rage is not a word that I would use with Nixon. But the Ziegler thing was frustration or something. I mean, but rage, I mean, rage is an out-of-a-control, anger type thing. Mad, yes, I mean, upset, yes. Pentagon Papers or -- there's that story -- there was some rally, maybe you've heard this, where he's just fit to be tied, and it went wrong. He got on the airplane, and he called the advance man up to the compartment, and he said, "I want it known back at headquarters this airplane is not going to land at anymore airports. Do you understand?" So, yeah, there were those kinds of moments.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did you know you were being taped?

**Dwight Chapin**

No.

**Male Speaker**

Let's pause right here.

**Dwight Chapin**

You mean with the system in the White House? I had no idea, and I don't think that there's many tapes of me.

**Timothy Naftali**

I was asking, did you know that you were being taped?

**Dwight Chapin**

I had no idea about the taping system, no.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did you ever talk to Haldeman about that, after all this went down?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, never.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did you talk to him a bit about -- we asked about your talking to Nixon -- did you ever talk to Haldeman about that era?

**Dwight Chapin**

To some degree. One thing in his book, his first book, whatever in the heck the name of that thing was that he claimed he should have never written but did write, he did not reference the Segretti thing correctly. He did not remember being in the office with Nixon and the hiring of Segretti or telling me to do it. I said, "Bob, by God, that's what happened." So when the revised edition came out he had corrected it and changed it. So, obviously, I had had some discussion with him about it because he made the change. Bob did come up to Lompoc and visit me so he could get a handle on what it was going to be like, because that's where he decided he wanted to go, and we probably talked about the thing then. I mean, yeah, but I don't remember the substance of it. I mean, I'm sure we sat there and talked about it for hours, but I don't remember what the details of it are. Oh, by the way, this is very important, I think. It has nothing to do with this interview. Kimberly, my daughter, she went to a school called New Trier, which is in Chicago, and she wrote Mitchell, Ehrlichman -- Mitchell, Ehrlichman, Haldeman, and Nixon, asking them questions about Watergate, and we have -- they all four responded, and we have their letters. And I should arrange for you to get copies -- I have to talk to Kimberly, but -- because she owns them. I said -- she's a real rabid Democrat, I think because of me -- but in any case, I said, "Sweetheart, these are incredibly valuable documents because they're from these four guys. I mean, so, you know, you could sell them, put them on eBay, or do something." And she said she really didn't have any interest in them, so they're sitting on my desk.

**Timothy Naftali**

I certainly would.

**Dwight Chapin**

Yeah, I think that that's where they belong. I think that would be a nice gift for her to make or something.

**Timothy Naftali**

[unintelligible]

**Dwight Chapin**

Is there a value -- do you put a value on this? Is there no tax-deductible thing?

**Timothy Naftali**

I'm not the person to ask, but I've heard that it's possible to do such things, but I don't know.

**Dwight Chapin**

Okay, back on track.

**Timothy Naftali**

I'm sure that there are appraisers that can give you a sense of how much they're worth. I wondered, you had -- we talked a bit about the weekend that John Mitchell decided to approve Magruder's plan. You had a sense that John Mitchell had been on the phone with Martha.

**Dwight Chapin**

No, he had been up all night with her. My understanding of this -- I wasn't there, so -- but my understanding is that, from John talking, John Mitchell talking to us, that John was up all night with Martha. Martha had a severe drinking problem, and he had been up all night with her, and then he had this meeting the next day. There's an interesting story here. The first time I ever heard the term "President-Elect" was when John Mitchell said, "Mr. President-Elect, I can't go with you." And that response was up in the Waldorf Towers when Nixon put his arm around John's shoulder and said, "John, we're going to Florida and start planning the government." And Mitchell said, "Mr. President-elect, I can't go with you." And a tear comes down his face and he says, "I've got to go to Connecticut and figure out what to do about Martha." And she was in an institution up in Connecticut at that point. So her problem really was severe then, and she gets out and she's in this Washington environment with all this heady stuff going on, and it was just a tragic story. And she was not a well person.

**Timothy Naftali**

You mention that you were a point of contact?

**Dwight Chapin**

She liked to call the President. She liked to call "my President." So she would call, and the system had been arranged by which I would take care of -- get Martha's calls, and I would, you know, talk to her and act accordingly whatever the thing was. I would also call over and let John know over, you know, that she had called. But she would call and say that, "I want to talk to my President." And I'd say, "Well, Mrs. Mitchell, you know, he's at a conference right now or telephone or whatever. May I take a message?" "I want to talk to him. You have him call me," and so forth. And then I would call her back, you know, 20 minutes later or whatever, and say, "Mrs. Mitchell, it's not going to be possible today." I mean, I always tried to complete the loop, but it was an awkward thing. And it was awkward for John to know that he had this woman that he was madly in love with, I mean he really loved this lady, but yet, you know, she was causing this commotion.

**Timothy Naftali**

Were the calls more frequent after the break-in in '72?

**Dwight Chapin**

Less frequent, I think. I mean, I'm talking, the calls were more frequent when he was attorney general, not after he left that position, and I really don't recall any kind of an increase. I remember, I mean, my immediate response is a tapering off.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did the President ever speak to her?

**Dwight Chapin**

At social events and so forth, but not on the phone. Well, I don't know. Never is pretty inclusive, but I don't think so, no.

**Timothy Naftali**

You don't recall. Do you have some questions you want to ask, Paul? I keep getting back to the fact that this was a very well-organized, or seemed to be a well-organized --

**Dwight Chapin**

Why does Segretti [unintelligible]?

**Timothy Naftali**

[unintelligible] to tell you, but if you look at all of these things, all of the various operations. Because, what I find interesting is why Haldeman tolerated these uncontrollable operations.

**Dwight Chapin**

Which ones? I mean, I only know of the Segretti one.

**Timothy Naftali**

The Segretti one, but also the Plumbers; he knew about the Plumbers.

**Dwight Chapin**

But he -- Bob's attitude on that would be, "That's Ehrlichman's problem." You've got it -- I mean, if Ehrlichman took something and went with it, that's Ehrlichman's. And Bob had enough on his plate that he's not worrying about what John's worried about. He more likely would be worried about something that Kissinger was doing, only because that's where Nixon's primary focus would be, and

the ramifications on that. And also, he was not a foreign policy expert, so he would be trying to really make sure that he wasn't screwing something up or messing around with -- Bob had a great philosophy. I mean, his approach on this was to, if he was in the President's office and there was a meeting going on and it got into a subject area that he was not knowledgeable about, he would attempt, not successfully all the time, but would attempt, to get the key person in. I think I mentioned this earlier, Shultz or whoever it might be. And he considered that really a key part of his job, so that -- because he didn't want to be in a bind either, where all of a sudden he's nodding or something, and Nixon's taking it as he wanted to get the expert there.

**Timothy Naftali**

Did you ever hear of the name E. Howard Hunt?

**Dwight Chapin**

No, no. Let me go back to Bob a minute. Jim Baker, Al Haig, and Don Rumsfeld all are people that I know. All of whom have said that the system that Haldeman put in place there was absolutely spectacular and that the modern White House today runs on the system that Bob put in. I mean, he made a major contribution to the office of the Presidency by how he -- what he got in place there.

**Timothy Naftali**

For people who want to understand that system, what should they look at? What were the --

**Dwight Chapin**

The staff secretariat system, how it works, how paperwork moves through, the whole option paper concept with the memorandums and the tabs and the staffing it out and making sure that clean, concise decisions could be made after proper considerations, and just the flow. I mean, Jerry Ford came in with this crazy hub-spoke thing, I mean, that no manager in their right mind would have because, I mean -- but coming after Nixon, it's understandable why he did it. It was a PR maneuver to say, "I'm here, and anybody can walk in the door." Well, you know, that's just not the proper way to run something, and all these other guys are bright enough to know that.

**Timothy Naftali**

But one of the consequences of that approach is that the center doesn't always get all the information.

**Dwight Chapin**

Oh, if it's run properly, the center gets all the information possibly necessary to make the right decision, because that's what the staffing system is all about, is to say -- let's pick an example. We have a memorandum from John Volpe at HUD, and he wants to have, in the next budget, this and this and this. And it impacts Treasury, and it impacts OEO, and it impacts three other things. That memorandum, that document, is sent out to Treasury, OEO, and the other departments that might be affected, memos are called back as to the impact on that, it's all put together, and it's sent in. So, it's a much better way of making certain that all the bases are covered and everybody's exposed to it then letting some cabinet officer come in and have a private meeting with the President, and God only

knows what's been said. And the cabinet officer hears one thing, Nixon thinks he said something else, and lo and behold, you've got a mess.

**Timothy Naftali**

Are you saying Watergate is a breakdown of that system?

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes, Watergate is a breakdown in the sense that, when Nixon and Haldeman -- this is a personal view. When Nixon and Haldeman started managing this the way that they did, and they excluded the people with the political sensitivities that would have realized how this was going to build and what was going to happen on the Hill and gotten Nixon to act in a political way, not necessarily in a managerial or legal way. I mean, you could make the case that, until somebody's indicted, they're innocent until proven guilty, dadadadada. But in politics, that's not always the best way to go, right? I mean, in my opinion.

**Timothy Naftali**

They also didn't, apparently didn't bring all the people into a room to ask them questions?

**Dwight Chapin**

Absolutely, John Mitchell was never asked. People were never asked.

**Timothy Naftali**

You asked -- you talked to John Mitchell.

**Dwight Chapin**

Yeah, I mean, people were never asked what happened. What the hell was going on here? I mean, what if you had called the CREEP people over, put 'em all in a room, and walked in there and said, "What the hell is going on here? We're not leaving until I fully understand. You're my campaign staff. I need to know what's going on here." Not Nixon's style, okay? He's not going to do that. He's a man that doesn't believe in confrontation. If he's going to have a confrontation, somebody else is going to do it for him.

**Timothy Naftali**

Why didn't Haldeman do it?

**Dwight Chapin**

Well, probably because if Bob had even raised that with the President, the President says, "Bob, maybe we don't want to know what's going on." I mean, I can't answer that, Tim; I really don't know.

**Paul Musgrave**

So, do you think this is also the kind of situation where, if there had been a Bryce Harlow or a Bob Finch or Eisenhower that would have [inaudible]?

**Dwight Chapin**

Yes, that's what I'm talking about, exactly. Yeah, the political guys, I mean, the political guys were the ones that would bitch the most about the Haldeman system. And the Haldeman system was terrific for running business, but not necessarily for making political judgments and the nuances that have to go into political calculation. The thing that's mind-boggling is the best politician of all is Nixon, and he suffers as he always does when he's under attack and when it's personal. He cannot -- in my reading of this, he does not make good decisions when it's personalized and he's under attack politically. If it's abstract, China, Russia and the world today and all that, he's brilliant, brilliant strategist. But, boy, when you get in tight and close and everything else and you're fighting him and you're fighting his people, and you're coming at him and it's "them/we," he starts falling apart. It's very tricky.

**Timothy Naftali**

You observed him very closely, had you noticed a change in him by the time he left the White House from the way he had been when he came to the White House?

**Dwight Chapin**

I saw him come into the White House and be fairly uptight for a few -- I mean, that would be my reading. And then relaxed and just really got into it and knew the job and felt comfortable and so forth. The war thing was just this albatross around him that was just this constant thing of trying to get past, and then Watergate, I was gone. I can't really talk about Watergate; I was gone.

**Timothy Naftali**

So, you didn't see as he got tense or anything?

**Dwight Chapin**

That's right.

**Timothy Naftali**

You saw him actually loosening up?

**Dwight Chapin**

I saw him really enjoying his job, and we had our moments, but I mean, it's -- yeah.

**Timothy Naftali**

Well, do you have anything you'd like to ask? Thank you very much, Dwight.

**Dwight Chapin**

I'm free, oh, thank you.