

Oral history interview with H.R. Haldeman,  
conducted by Raymond H. Gieselbracht and Fred J. Graboske  
at the Pickett Street Annex of the National Archives  
on August 13, 1987

FJG: OK, Mr. Haldeman, you said that the one item you did want to talk about was the fire bombing of [the] Brookings [Institution]. How did you learn of this plan?

HRH: I'm glad to have a--I wasn't all that anxious to talk about it, it's just that that's something that like so many things in the Nixon quote, "history," closed quote, has become quote, "fact," closed quote, and somewhere the record's got to be set straight someday. Maybe this will be one opportunity to do that.

Let me put a disclaimer in on a general basis so I do it once before--because it applies to this as well as a lot of other answers, and then I'm not going to refer to it anymore. But it applies to the whole conversation this morning. And that is that in thinking about answering these questions--and having spent a couple days working through some archival material the last two days in another direction--it occurs to me, that in talking this morning you [have] got to, and the user of this material in the future has got to, recognize that this is now 1987, that I left the White House fourteen years ago, and that events in the White House that took place prior to my departure, which I presume is what we're going to be talking about primarily, took place eighteen, up to eighteen years ago, [and] that you the archivists have the advantage of having--at least some of you--of having

heard substantial portions of the recorded White House tapes from which you think at least you can get precisely what we said on all kinds of occasions. As you know better than anyone else in the world, you can't be very precise even with that remarkable source because of it's difficulty of interpretation and audition, but it's certainly an outstandingly good source, but I don't have the advantage of that. I have given virtually no thought to any of this subject matter for--well, since I finished my book which was, what?--I don't even remember when it came out--'77--ten years ago! So there's a ten year blank in my attention focus on this subject matter. And I'll be as frank as I can and as thorough as I can in responding this morning, but with the understanding that if some higher source, such as the tapes, such as my own logs, and other materials to which you have access, contradict, or in some way disagree with what I'm saying today, you've got to take what I'm saying today as my view or my memory at this point and not concurrent to the facts. So while I know a lot of things that might be of interest and value, [and] that I'm happy to discuss, they've got to be considered in that highlight and I have obviously done no research in preparation for this and have no research materials available at hand to refer to, so there's no way I can be precise on dates and specifics of that kind.

But [with] that much longer than I intended disclaimer, let me say that the Brookings Institution fire bombing episode--(or) whatever you want, "incident," whatever you want to call it--has been blown ludicrously out of proportion by exactly the process

that is so deplorable on the part of, primarily journalists, but also I've got to say, historians, of taking something that--a clue--and establishing it, drawing a conclusion from it, and then establishing that conclusion as the fact, and letting it ride from there. And it gets to be a little absurd. I don't remember and you probably do when the fire bombing came up, but I suspect it was when [John W.] Dean was reporting to Nixon on various "horrors," the White House "horrors," and at somewhere in that he said something about, "And there was a plan to fire bomb the Brookings Institution." I think that's where it came up; I don't know. But, however it came up, however it got into the public record, the concept, the facts as I remember and understand them are: that some White House staff members, NSC [National Security Council] staff members, had left the NSC staff and had joined the Brookings Institution. Is it institute or institution? I'd better get the name right.

FJG: Institution, I think.

HRH: I think it's institution. But anyway, [they] had joined Brookings and it was our understanding that they had taken--I guess, somebody, [Alexander M.] Haig or someone, had learned that they had taken with them substantial quantities of NSC White House files and there was concern that these files--including all kinds of Top Secret and highly super-sensitive material relating to Vietnam negotiations, in Paris, the secret negotiations, the conduct of the war, various strategic planning alternatives and all that sort of thing--there was concern these were in the hands of both individuals and an institution whose view at that time

was substantially contradictory to that of the administration, and opposed to that of the administration. Discussion was held as to what could be done to resecure or retrieve those files so that they would not be available to public dissemination or to dissemination to the enemy, for that matter, because there was a serious national security concern. I distinctly remember--my memory is going to be good on some things--and I distinctly remember this one, [since] I had been in my prior-to-government life in the advertising agency business under a security clearance because we handled the Douglas Aircraft Company account, and we dealt with, in background files, a lot of secure material and we were required to keep in our office a safe and DOD [Department of Defense] inspectors would come in periodically and make sure that we were handling these materials properly--look through our procedures, interview personnel, that sort of thing. Remembering that, when Haig came in and raised the question with me, "What do we do about all these files that are over at Brookings? We have to figure out a way to get that back," I said there's a very simple way to do it. They were talking about, you know, trying to break in or--I mean there were a lot of questions [about] what was a way that we could get those.

FJG: Who was talking about trying to break in?

HRH: I don't know. I think probably [Charles W.] Colson at that point. But my point--my suggestion was there's a very simple way to do it. We control the DOD security people, send security officers over, unannounced, which was the way they always arrived

at our J. Walter Thompson offices. Send them over unannounced; say that they are there on a routine inspection of proper storage and handling of classified materials; have them locate those materials wherever they are; have them--have a truck ready outside, and a crew; have them immediately say these are not being handled properly and secured properly--they must be repossessed. And haul your crew in, blow whistles or whatever you do, haul your crew in, load the stuff up in trucks and haul it out, and take it away. For some reason that didn't excite Haig as a solution to the thing, but somewhere in this process Chuck Colson had come into the thing and it's my belief [that], totally in jest, Colson said well why go to all that trouble, there's a much simpler way of doing it--fire bomb Brookings and in the confusion send some people in, grab the files, and haul them out. And that became an apocryphal story along with his, you know, walking over his grandmother, and some of Colson's other Marine Corps aphorisms. And I think that's the sum and substance and totality of the plan to fire bomb the Brookings. I do not believe and can not conceive that there was ever any serious thought given to such a program. There was serious thought given to how to get the files back. To my knowledge they never were gotten back. I don't know.

FJG: Did Haig ever suggest a solution to that problem?

HRH: Not that I recall. I think he suggested the problem rather than a solution.

FJG: OK. One of my favorite subjects of course is the White House tapes and I wondered if you have any memories of how the taping

system came about. Did Nixon have any conversations with you--he must have had conversations with you--about the need to have a taping system.

HRH: He had--it goes back, of course, to when we first came into the White House. We were told--I don't remember whether [Lyndon B.] Johnson told him during the transition period or whether it was J. Edgar Hoover that told him, or some other source--but anyway we knew. President Nixon knew [and] I knew that President Johnson had a taping system and a cut-in system where he could listen to telephone conversations of staff members, and that sort of thing--a substantial sophisticated electronic eavesdropping system that included taping. It was done, as we understood, on a control basis. There were control switches that you could turn these various aspects on and off--in other words, manually control. Also, it was my understanding, and I believe that it's true because I saw what I believe was the equipment, that the equipment was in what became my original office in the White House, which was the small office just to the west of the President's office, the Oval Office. Then there's a corridor with a little hideaway office on that corridor, and then the next office to that which President [Jimmy] Carter, I know, used as a study for himself and I don't know what it's used for now--that was my office originally until I moved down to the corner office, the southwest corner. But in a closet in that office next to the fireplace, up in the upper levels of the closet, was an enormous amount of electronic gear. And it was my understanding that was either all or a major part of the Johnson

taping system. So we knew Johnson did it. Nixon abhorred the thought and said that's all to be taken out. I want nothing in here at all. It was all taken out, along with the orders to take out the three television set system that Johnson had in the office, and the ticker-tape system where the wire service tickers were coming in all the time. All that was ordered taken out, and it was, forthwith, when we came into the White House. And there was no effort to tape conversations either in the office or on the telephone, to my knowledge. And I don't believe there was. I can't conceive that there would have been such a thing and I wouldn't have known it. But then [John D.] Ehrlichman couldn't conceive there would have been [something] that he didn't know about and he didn't know about the taping system.

In any event, the President went through a cycle, and my yellow notes perusal [referring to his own recent examination of his White House notes] will confirm this, went through a series of cycles, really, in the early days of the administration of trying to figure out procedurally how to keep track of what was said and what was decided in presidential meetings with staff and outside people. We tried different methods. We tried having a recorder and auditor in the meeting who would sit there and make notes. That got eliminated very quickly. The President was opposed to it already, but we tried it. He said it won't work and it didn't, for him. The reason he was opposed was that as Vice President when he was on his travels the State Department always had someone in to record--on paper, not electronically--discussions, and he felt that that inhibited both him and the

other person he was meeting with, and it was not a comfortable thing. He felt the same thing in the Oval Office, and he rejected that notion. He then tried a system which I think Andy [Andrew J.] Goodpaster had suggested as one alternative to this, of somebody trying to debrief the President or the President trying to debrief himself after the meeting. In other words, immediately following a meeting either [to] dictate or write notes concerning the meeting substance and content and so on. He wasn't--he was not willing [as] it turned out--that didn't turn out to be practical either. He neither did it himself nor was he willing to be debriefed by someone else. Then we tried a system of setting up a debriefing person in the secretary's office on the east side of the Oval Office so that as a visitor came out this person would pick the visitor up and take him to a private office and attempt to debrief from that side. But that had several flaws: one, it was awkward; two, it wasn't very successful; and, three, it only succeeded in getting the visitor's view of the content rather than the President's view or the totality. There was also concern on the President's part through that whole period, and it continued--it continued right on through all the time I was at the White House--that there was--[that] this process did not in any way produce any sense of the flavor of a meeting, of the attitudes of the two people, of [their] positions, of the expressions on their faces and that kind of thing, which he felt historically was important. Not substantively, particularly--but the other stuff we were talking about was really substantive importance--but he was then

concerned about historical importance. And that whole atmospheric thing was being lost historically, and that concerned him and we tried various ways of correcting that. We tried having me and at times other staff members sit in meetings but not make notes--but not participate in the meeting--and then debrief ourself, himself, the staff person, after the meeting and get the thing down that way. And we came to the ultimate in people to do that finally, which was Dick Walters, General Vernon Walters, who has a photographic mind, and it occurred to us that he would be the ultimate person to do that and I actually, at the President's direction--this was much later on--called Dick Walters in. He was at the time, I don't know, assigned to NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization], or someplace--but anyway, [I] called him in to say that the President would like to put him to this assignment. He drew himself up to his full generalship splendor, puffed his chest out and stuck his medals in front of my face and said, "I am a general in the United States Army, I am a commander of troops, I am not a secretary to anybody" [laughter]. And he was highly indignant and incensed that it would even be thought that he should sit in meetings, not participate substantively, and be used only as a recorder of the thing afterwards. So that fell [flat]. Anyway, come--there were several times that Nixon, President Nixon, met with President Johnson--while we had the Johnson's out to San Clemente and went through a lot of things with President Johnson at that time about both his problems in dealing with his declassification materials and all sorts of things relating [to] the historical records of

the Johnson administration. And--I think Tom [W. Thomas] Johnson was with him at the time--one of his staff people and I spent a lot of time with the staff person going through those kinds of problems with him, and President Johnson was full of advice, as the foremost ex-President, to the incumbent President about what he was going to be facing as an ex-President someday and what steps he ought to be taking now to deal with that. I think at the Johnson Library dedication, which was another time the two spent some time together, that--when was that? The time?

FJG: January of '71

HRH: OK, so that's right before the taping system started. OK, so that would affirm my speculation. I think it has to be at this stage, that this is when it took place. Probably at that time Johnson got into [it] again and [in] the way only Lyndon Johnson could do--[he] said, "You know, you're [a] God-damned fool not to be keeping a record of what's going on. I mean there's important things there." Going back I should insert in the record too that Hoover, I know--and why I said earlier that Hoover may have been the one that told him about the Johnson taping system--Hoover did say that he knew that unbeknownst to Johnson, he believed, the [U.S. Army] Signal Corps was monitoring presidential phone conversations and that they were being reported presumably to the Joint Chiefs of Staff or the military command in some area and that he wanted President Nixon to be aware of that, and a result of that was President Nixon did not use the signal communication facility. He used the White House phone facility and he had instructions, I think it was to the Secret Service, to carefully

test constantly whether any conversations were being monitored, and he went on the assumption that signal conversations, which we had to use sometimes, were being monitored. Do you want sidelights as I think of them?

FJG: Sure.

HRH: And you edit later into subject areas?

FJG: Yes, we'll take care of it.

HRH: Because that raises another interesting sidelight, which is the concern in exactly the same way [with] communications. When we were at Camp David, something came up where the President made a phone call to someone about something from Aspen. And [Henry A.] Kissinger, Ehrlichman, and I think [George P.] Shultz and I were all staying over at Laurel, and--we were up at Camp David for the weekend, which was fairly common. The President told someone something and within minutes, Kissinger got a call from [Melvin R.] Laird, Secretary of Defense, at our--we were in the lounge. Kissinger got a call from Laird furious that the President was doing something that the only way he could possibly have known the President was doing it was having overheard or been informed of the President's phone conversation. And that confirms all of this. That we were being monitored by other--not with presidential authorization--by other agencies. That's a sidelight.

Go back to the taping system. In any event the President concluded that--and I think it's possible that I suggested this or that the President suggested something that had come from President Johnson, but then I confirmed--which was that the

really practical way [was] to record accurately, as accurately as was feasibly possible, what the President was saying to people and what people were saying to the President, in order to protect the President's record. And I'll get into the reasons for that in a second.

Well, no, let me cover the reasons now. The reasons, being, first of all, the concern that people [would] meet with the President and go out and say the President said do this or he believes this or he's going to do this. And they aren't always accurate, for a lot of reasons. One, they don't understand the terminology the President is using. Often the people that are meeting with the President are not at the same level of knowledge or understanding that the President is and thus communication is difficult. And this is a real problem in the conduct of the office of the Presidency. But that's one area. Another area is that people come out and not with good will, but with in effect ill will--evil intent if you want to put it that way, I wouldn't make it quite that sinister--but they say things that didn't even come up at all. People come out and say the President wants this done and because they just walked out of the President's office someone outside believes that that's what the President told them to say. And we found that that was happening. Johnson had told us that happens. He said, "You know everybody in this town will call anybody else and say the President wants this and the President wants that." And that's true. So, it was to deal with that kind of thing. It was also--in dealing with foreign visitors there was the question of interpretation and no means to

change it. The President liked--and he didn't always do it, but he often did--he liked the idea of in effect going bare in a conversation with a foreign visitor. Meaning, he would not have his own interpreter there; he'd let the foreign [visitor] bring his interpreter, which would give them a sense of real confidence and was unusual in diplomatic exchange, and he found it a way to be forthcoming. We did this in China. We did it in the Soviet Union.

FJG: Right.

HRH: We let Viktor [Sukhodrev] do the interpretation.

FJG: I've heard a lot of references to Viktor.

HRH: Really? [Laughter] I can imagine. He's a well-known character. But, we did--the President did in those things often try to have someone, some staff person who spoke the language, like Winston Lord, or Marshall Green I guess spoke some of the Asian languages--somebody who would be normally in the meeting anyway that would not serve as an interpreter but would be monitoring the level of interpretation so he could report later that it was or wasn't accurate.

And, to give you another incident, going back to Dick Walters, Vernon Walters, who did travel as a presidential interpreter frequently. And on State occasions of course, when the President was making a speech or an arrival statement or something like that, he would use his interpreter to do that. It was in the conversations that we used the foreign nation's interpreter. But we were at--in Germany--at a small stag dinner given by Chancellor [Kurt G.] Kiesinger I believe, I think on the

first visit--I'm not--I'm pretty sure that's right. Anyway, it was a small dinner, there were about twenty of us around an oval table, and--it was not a state dinner as I said, it was informal. The Chancellor--I was sitting next to Willy Brandt, who was out of office and out of favor at the time but was brought in as an opposition leader. Willy Brandt, of course, speaks good English, as did many of the Germans present. But the German Chancellor made his remarks in German and then his translator, his interpreter, stood up to interpret. And as he got a little ways into it--and he [the Chancellor] spoke for about ten minutes, and the translator had been writing it down so as not to interrupt sentence by sentence--Willy Brandt turned to me and said, "That's not what he said." And it went a little further and some of the other Germans started [Haldeman thumps the table] making noises [indicating], "That's not correct." At that point Dick Walters, who was along as Nixon's interpreter, said "Mr. Chancellor, with your permission may I be of some help in trying to straighten this out?" or something [of that kind]. Walters then proceeds, with no notes whatsoever, to stand up and give a ten minute speech--which was the Chancellor's speech, which every German there said--they were mindboggled. Because they said "That has to be verbatim [laughter]--it's exactly what the Chancellor said." But it shows you there is a problem with interpretation and the tapes were a factor in that.

Another concern was Nixon's interest, which was evidenced in other ways also, for historical accuracy for his own use in writing memoirs and/or whatever other preparation of historical

record he might do in his post-presidential period. And he, among the other methods, he did do a lot of dictating into a dictating machine--a tape recorder--his recollections of the day and things that were not--I think a lot of them were not transcribed. I don't know. Those probably are in his files, not the Archives.

FJG: That's correct.

HRH: [They] properly should be because they were personal. But--as were mine that should be in my files, but are not [Haldeman laughter].

FJG: They are now.

HRH: Redacted copies [laughter].

Anyhow, the--all those are indications of his interest in the historical side of it, and the tapes were viewed as being valuable from an historical viewpoint also. I assume in the White House tapes--well no, that's right, because any discussion of the tapes, pre-taping, would not be on the tapes, obviously because they weren't there. I was going to say because I think there were discussions in the Oval Office about--between the President and me as to how to do this. Anyway, he agreed to the setting up--he didn't like the idea particularly, but he figured this was the best solution we had come up with--to setting up the taping system. He was going to do it the way I believe Johnson had suggested, which is to have a switch of some kind or some signal device that would enable him to turn the machine on when he wanted and turn it off when he wanted. I said, "Mr. President, you'll never remember to turn it on except when you

don't want it, and when you do want it you're going to raise hell afterwards that, you know, nobody had the tape on and that was the vital conversation with someone that should have been on. So," I said, "either you've got to have the switching system under someone else's control, or you've got to have the thing voice activated." And he didn't know what voice activated was, and I explained that there was--I didn't know exactly but I was aware that there was a technological possibility that the recording system would be turned off when the room was silent and as soon as sound appeared in the room it would turn the system on and it would record during the time that sound was happening in the room. And so he said, "OK, see if we can do that." And we did. And that--he gave me the instructions to set up the system. It was to be absolutely confidential. I was to have--let no one on the senior staff know. I was to let no one [know], and his feeling on this was not--he was not trying to trap anybody. It was--he was trying to protect everybody. He felt [that] if anybody knew [about the tapes] there was the potential of the tapes being misused, of the meetings being misused for taping purposes, and all kinds of things like that. So his point was, "The tapes are for my," Nixon's, "use only. No one else is ever to hear them except you and me." He did include me in them. He said, "I don't want them transcribed. I don't want anything done with them. I want them kept totally secured during the entire time we're in office. When we leave office, they'll be available. I may use them as a reference if I ever get into a donnybrook of disagreement or confusion as to what was said

between me and a foreign person," a visitor or something. "I may ask to hear them. So, I want them coded so that they can--in chronological order, and that we can find things within them. Nobody's to listen to them--nobody!" I now believe that order was violated.

FJG: Who do you think listened to them?

HRH: The Secret Service.

FJG: Was there ever any discussion of Alex [Alexander P.] Butterfield listening to them?

HRH: No, and it would surprise me if Alex did, but he might have, and, if he had, I would suspect he would argue he did in order to assure the system was working, and I would suspect Secret Service would do likewise.

RHG: Why do you think their motive was?

HRH: Maybe just to be sure the system was working. I don't know. I don't ascribe any motive, and I can't even--I don't--to my personal knowledge, I don't know that anybody did listen. I have the feeling that they did was all. And my suspicion as to why would be primarily--well, first of all, to affirm that the system was working and, secondly, without ascribing bad motives to anybody, I think in the trade you get interested in stuff like this. In seeing how the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] dealt with wiretap material and that kind of thing, I think sometimes it's, you know, some of the boys sitting around the tape room late at night with nothing to do, and they said, "Well, let's listen to that funny meeting with so-and-so again," or something, you know, and they got some entertainment material

there. I'm not saying that they did that; I have no proof. I just suspect that that might be a possibility. I not only have no proof, I don't have any indication that that's the case. And I can't tell you why I have the feeling that they were listened to at all, but through the taping revelation and investigation and court hearing process and all that, I acquired that feeling. I still have it.

So, I, as was my administrative procedure on all matters, pretty much--subject to various individual variations--told [Lawrence M.] Higby, my assistant, to figure out a way of doing this, or something to that effect. He came up with the plan, I believe, or maybe I did, that the way to do it was to have the control mechanism in Butterfield's office--which was my old office, right out--the office next to the Oval Office--and to set up a voice-activated system. I think originally--and you probably already know this, I'm sure that this has been acquired in evidence on the tapes--but I think originally the system was put only in the Oval Office and, I don't know, the EOB [(Old) Executive Office Building] office or something. It was later added to somewhere in the Residence.

FJG: The phones were tapped.

HRH: Was that it? Just the phones?

FJG: That's right--the phones in each office and the phone in the Lincoln Sitting Room.

HRH: That's it, the Lincoln Sitting Room. And then later we did something at Camp David too, didn't we? The phones only?

FJG: The phones and the room itself were bugged.

HRH: The room was bugged, OK. But those were expansions later. In other words, the President got to thinking about it, and he I'm sure realized that there were conversations going on in these other areas that ought to be on that tape also. And I'm sure that those additions were all done at the President's orders. It may have been at my suggestion, on the basis, you know, of that whole conversation is not on the tape. Although, I've got to say, you know, well anyway--staying with the process for a minute, Butterfield then utilized the Secret Service--Al Wong's division--as the operative unit to design, acquire, install, and operate the bugging system, taping system, and they did. And they were, as I understood it, instructed to remove the tapes as they became full and store them in highly secure storage. And they were not to be--their existence was not to be known to anyone except those agents specifically assigned to the project, and as few as possible, and all that sort of thing. So, there was a very determined effort to keep them at a maximum level of secrecy. And--I started to say something else but I forgot what it was.

FJG: OK, so that's the genesis of the system.

HRH: That's the genesis of the system.

FJG: Were you conscious of it while you were meeting with Nixon?

HRH: That's what I was going to say. In the early stages you wondered if it was working, and I'm sure we had some--I'm sure at that point I had Butterfield or the Secret Service or Larry--somebody do some tests to be sure they were getting tapes and that they were audible.

FJG: They're very poor quality.

HRH: As it turns out [laughter], yean, they weren't all that great. But, anyway, we were aware of it. I'm sure the President was too, to some degree. It's amazing how--and it's absolutely true, even though amazing--that I lost my awareness of it very quickly. I think the President lost his awareness of it even more quickly. And that it never occurred to me, in the process of anything that was going on, to say, "The President"--to think to myself, "The President's saying this for the tape recording", or, in my own terms--and I think if you listen to the tapes is the best confirmation of that--I can absolutely guarantee you that had I thought the tapes--well, I don't know. What I was going to say is that, had I remembered or been conscious of the taping system operating, there are a lot of things I wouldn't have said, that I did say, as the tapes show. I'm not sure that's true, because there's another factor in here. It was my understanding, and I had no question about it, that these tapes were not to be heard, ever, by anybody except the President and possibly me, and/or of course some agent. I made the point to the President early on that we were going to have a real problem with these tapes because--he said, "Only you and I are going to be able to hear them," and I said, you know, "Well, when this is all over, there's going to be thousands of hours on these tapes, and neither you nor I are going to be very interested, after your Presidency comes to a close, in sitting and listening to those thousands of hours of tapes. And someone's going to have to transcribe them." And I think, as a matter of fact--and I'd

forgotten this--but I think I argued at the time for concurrent transcription. I said, "The easy way to do this is assign someone now, and get it done--to transcribe those tapes every day and just keep it a constant project of keeping them transcribed. And the President said, "No, I don't want anybody hearing them. I don't want anybody else to hear them now. It will be all right later. We can get transcribers in and do that. We'll work that out later on." Think of the trouble I could've saved you!

[Laughter] I tried to save you!

FJG: You'd have needed an army of transcribers.

RHG: Like maybe fifty people, or something like that.

HRH: Would it really?

FJG: Our work with transcription is that it takes 160 hours of work for every hour of conversation.

HRH: You're kidding!

FJG: So, if you wanted it done on a daily basis and if you had eight hours of conversation, you would have needed quite a number of people to do it.

HRH: Yeah, you sure would. OK, well, then my system wouldn't have worked anyway [laughter]. The other thing would have been to designate those things that were to be transcribed each day. I mean, I could've gone through the schedule and picked the things that should be transcribed, and we could've done selective concurrent transcription, which might've made some sense. Well, anyway, we didn't do it. I was not really aware of it [the taping system], and I don't believe the President was because--well, it's clear the President wasn't because, knowing him, if he

had remembered they [his conversations] were being taped--even if he thought only he was going to hear them--he would've never said a lot of the things that he said on the tapes. That's good--that proves that the system did what we wanted it to do. It not only didn't inhibit anybody else, it didn't even inhibit the two of us in the room that knew about the taping system. I really don't think we were conscious of it, all that time. I think you'll see somewhere in the Watergate tapes some evidence of that in the fact that somewhere along the line, when the President was trying to--was worrying about what he had said to John Dean--he said, "You know, I wonder what I covered in that meeting" or "I wonder what he told me" or something. I then reminded him that there was a taping system and that we could get the tapes, and that's when he then ordered me to go listen to the March 21 tape or whatever it was, which I then did while I was still on the staff. The tapes probably show that that's what happened, don't they?

FJG: They do.

HRH: OK. I don't think we were aware of it, and I know that's hard for a lot of people to believe...

FJG: Yes it is.

HRH: ...and even the lawyers never believed it. But, you know, the truth is stranger than fiction sometimes, and I really think that's the case.

But I felt--continuing that tape thing, the big argument is "Why didn't the President burn the tapes?" I've written or spoken of the incident where John Connally called me after I was out of the White House and said--pleaded with me to get a hold of

the President and convince him to destroy the tapes while he still had them under his control. And--the President I know believed, and I certainly believed, that he did have total control of them. Presidential personal property was presidential personal property. Nobody in the world could get at it. It was totally secure and totally controlled by the President of the United States, or the former President of the United States. And we knew that in the case of Johnson's stuff. So, he never worried about the fact that someone else would get the tapes, and I didn't. And I felt that he should keep the tapes because obviously--by this time I was out of the White House and things were really boiling up--and I felt there was material in the tapes, and I obviously was wrong, I guess, that would be very helpful in resolving and getting through this whole Watergate thing. As it turned out, of course, that's what sank me and then him. But, I, oddly enough, didn't believe that. When Haig first called me to say the [Senate Select Committee on Presidential Campaign Activities, or Ervin] Committee knew about the tapes--he called me, I was in Newport Beach, and he called me to say that Butterfield had told the [Ervin Committee] staff that we had the taping system, and he said, "What should we do?" and I said, "I wouldn't worry about it. In the first place we've got total control of them. If there's executive privilege applying to anything, it sure as hell applies to that." We were arguing executive privilege on a lot of stuff at that point--they were. I said, "I think the tapes will be very helpful." And Haig said, "Well, is there anything in them that's going to be harmful to

the President?" I said, "There's a lot of stuff in them that's going to be undesirable. All you've got to do is think back to your conversations with the President and recognize that they're all on the tape. But, since you can control release, there's going to be things on there that could conclusively prove that someone said this or someone said that that might be useful." So they kept them. And I think the President believed the same thing, because he wouldn't have gone just on my view on something like that, at that stage especially. It didn't bother me that he had, you know--that the tapes were there at all. I would've argued against destroying them if I had been asked, you know--if he had said, "I'm going to destroy them", I would've made a strong case against it.

FJG: You did.

HRH: Did I?

FJG: In April of 1973.

HRH: In April--before I left.

FJG: Before you left.

HRH: OK. But I would've afterwards, after they were discovered I also would have. See, at that time of course, I really would argue against it because at that time there's no question in my mind. Nobody knew they existed except the President and me and at that point Steve [Stephen B.] Bull knew I guess, because he had sort of replaced Butterfield. He had replaced him, hadn't he?

FJG: Yes.

HRH: Because Butterfield's gone on to FAA [Federal Aviation Administration] by then. OK, right. So, that's why. And

obviously now I guess I wish the tapes had been destroyed. I don't know. I'm not sure I do, even now. The thing that disturbs me about the tapes and about the forthcoming release of the tapes is not that everything in there is available, in the abstract, because I--you've listened to a lot more of them than I have, so you can in your own mind confirm or deny the belief that I have which is that a great proportion of what's on--well, a lot of what's on the tapes is irrelevant, I mean unimportant, and dull and useless.

FJG: Yeah.

HRH: Probably the bulk of it. Maybe not. But a lot of it anyway--a very substantial portion is useless. And then there's a substantial portion that's very harmful in one way or another to either the President and/or other people.

FJG: Some.

HRH: Embarrassing.

FJG: We have made an attempt, as part of our standard archival processing, to delete those portions which are either Nixon's property and those that do--the Court enjoined us to protect his Fourth Amendment right to private political association, which means Nixon as candidate or head of the party is his property. All conversations with or about his family, health, finances, religious views, unless it's in some way related to Watergate [are his property too].

HRH: Personal friends also?

FJG: In some cases, in some cases.

HRH: Because there's some--in some of the stuff I've just been going

through, there's some stuff that really concerns me, that....

FJG: Many conversations with [Charles G. "Bebe"] Rebozo....

HRH: Or about staff people?

FJG: [Conversations about] staff people would be retained....

HRH: Even if they're personally slurs?

FJG: If we believe that they're....

HRH: I guess so, because you've published stuff. What comes to mind is some of the things about Herb [Herbert G.] Klein, comments the President made about Herb Klein that were published in the Watergate tapes.

FJG: Well, we never published any of this [unintelligible].

HRH: No, I know you didn't, you didn't, but the court did.

FJG: Yeah. If we thought that an individual would be libelled by these comments....

HRH: That's right. You take it out if it's libel or slander, but you don't take it out if it's just uncomplimentary.

FJG: Right. Nixon has--well, Nixon now has....

HRH: And if he says staff man A is doing a lousy job, you'd leave that in. If he says staff man A is...

FJG: ...is a drunk.

HRH: ...is a drunken homosexual, you'd take it out.

FJG: Take it out.

HRH: OK.

FJG: And Nixon will have the right to object, as he has objected to documents, to portions of the tapes being released.

HRH: OK, well, that'll help. It may help a lot, it may solve a lot of my concerns, but even then, no matter what--I'm basing it on the

Watergate tape release, because in the Watergate tapes there's a lot of very useful stuff--helpful, positive, constructive--that the world knows nothing about because the published media chose not to publish the tapes in their entirety, but to select the parts that were most damaging, or least flattering, to the President and/or his associates and publish those. And I know that that's exactly what's going to happen when you make more tapes available. Just as has happened when you made the yellow pages available, my yellow notes. They came pouring in here to find all the stuff in my yellow notes. They didn't--they couldn't understand them and couldn't find anything damaging, so there's been nothing published about them, that I can find.

FJG: You're right.

HRH: And yet there's incredible amounts of very valuable information in my yellow notes. Now historians will work through that and find stuff.

FJG: That's right.

HRH: But journalists won't.

RHG: You need to allow a little more time. The journalists allow...

HRH: But see the unfortunate....

RHG: ...five hours....

HRH: Yeah, but the unfortunate thing is that the world in general and the American public in general will never know what the historians find and put out. I know you archivists don't like to think this is true, but it is. What they will know or believe is what the journalists find and put out, because that's what'll come to their attention. Any given history book is not going to

be read by very many people, compared to an article syndicated in a newspaper or a news item on "CBS Evening News".

RHG: I think you just need to allow a little more time, because eventually the journalists will be drawing some of their articles and pieces on television from the history books.

HRH: Well, that's where I feel--I was saying, you know, I'm not sure I would even want the tapes destroyed even knowing what I know now. I feel that's [the tapes are] of value because right now the historians are incestuously drawing on themselves. And I find now constantly history books being written that pick up mythology from earlier books that are pure crap--Dan Rather's being a primary case in point. I mean, the Rather book is so full of lies about me, lies in terms of absolute factual errors--that I grew up in Orange County, that I was kicked out of the.... These aren't important things, but they're important enough that he put them in the book. I never lived in Orange County. I stayed there for one month right after I left the White House, at a friend's home before I got my house in Los Angeles. He says I grew up down the street from John Wayne, in Orange County. He says I was kicked out of the Big Canyon Country Club. I was never a member of the Big Canyon Country Club, so I couldn't have been kicked out of it. And, as a matter of fact, I've only been in there once, which was to have lunch with Herb [Herbert W.] Kalmbach [laughter], years and years ago.

RHG: And you walked out yourself.

HRH: I walked out. They didn't even carry me out, right [laughter]. It was before Watergate. It was before the White House.

RHG: I think the historians' fraternity is going to deny membership to Dan Rather, though.

HRH: I should think that would be a wise move on their part.

RHG: I think what you say is very pertinent....

HRH: But, you see, nobody'll ever go back and do what I have been tempted to do which is to publish a book titled "Errata"--  
"E-R-R-A-T-A."

[END OF REEL 1]

[BEGIN REEL 2]

HRH: Ask me any kinds of stuff like that, because, you know, it may bring--see, just like you raised that question on Butterfield listening for color. I had forgotten that. I don't question that it happened. Because in the early era there was an effort to try to find out what the tapes would do, I guess--that we, I think, must have given up pretty quickly. I don't think we worked with that thought for any length of time, because I think we went really into neutral on the fact that they were even there. And I never knew--I knew in general there was supposed to be bugs under some lamps and some bugs embedded in the desk, and once in awhile I did look around trying to find them [laughter], because I got curious about it in the early part of it. I could never find any indication of where any of them were.

FJG: OK. Do you remember a conversation you had, the conversation I referred to earlier, a conversation you had with Nixon in April of 1973 about the tapes, about destruction of the tapes?

HRH: I don't really, and obviously they're on the tapes, so my memory

of it is irrelevant anyhow. The tapes are better evidence. But I don't--it doesn't surprise me, because I know we got into the tape issue in terms of trying to--I think specifically trying to verify what Nixon had said to Dean and what Dean had said to Nixon.

FJG: That's right.

HRH: And Nixon was trying to figure that out, and I know that I then painstakingly had that reel that covered--I think March 21, is that the right date?

FJG: Right. That's the one.

HRH: The March 21 thing. And that I went in the little President's lounge office in the corridor, between Butterfield's office and the Oval Office, locked the door, and sat in there and listened to the tape. And--actually, it was Steve Bull's office I guess by then.

FJG: It might have been.

HRH: Whatever, I don't know. But anyhow, I know I remember going in there, locking myself in and trying to listen to the thing, and having a terrible time doing it, which I think I probably reported to the President. It was hard to hear parts of it, or something. That's not a bad tape, though.

FJG: It's one of the best.

HRH: It's an Oval Office tape, and...

FJG: It's very clear.

HRH: ...and there weren't interruptions. You didn't have Manolo [Sanchez] with the coffee, I don't think.

FJG: No.

HRH: That sure helped.

FJG: It was a Godsend. You said in your book that you thought that the person with the most to lose from the release of the tapes was Henry Kissinger.

HRH: Did I say that?

FJG: You said it.

HRH: In my book? I know I've said it, but I didn't realize I'd said it in the book.

FJG: Would you care to elaborate on that?

HRH: Yeah, I will. I think that--let me preface it by saying that despite the current history, and I think the tapes will show this--I would assume they would on my part, at least, and I think they will on Henry's part--there was not an enmity between Kissinger and me. There was a strong friendship on a personal basis, and a strong collegueship on a professional basis. I had enormous admiration and affection for Henry, and I think he did for me. I know I frustrated the hell out of him at times, and he frustrated the hell out of me at times, because we were operating under very intense conditions. But that's true with Higby, with [Dwight L.] Chapin, with Ehrlichman, with all the people with whom we worked closely. Under those conditions you can have a very strong personal affection and professional admiration and still have a lot of clashes, and we did. But my--I sat in a lot of meetings with Henry Kissinger and the President and I had a lot of personal meetings myself with Henry Kissinger that resulted from or led to meetings that Henry had with the President, so I have a pretty good feeling of a lot of the things

that the President and Henry discussed and the way in which they discussed them, and so forth. Early on, Henry took what I viewed, and view, as a proper role of a presidential advisor. He was an inside man, a staff person and there's stuff--I saw just in my notes going through it yesterday the point that Henry must not be a spokesman, must not get out--this is in the early days--that he would destroy his usefulness as a staff person once he became a figure in his own right, which of course he did, in many ways--both become a figure in his own right and destroy his usefulness as a staff person. Certainly, he damaged his usefulness as a staff person.

I firmly believe in the passion for anonymity concept for presidential staff, except for those staff people whose role it is to be spokesmen and [who] don't have other roles. Such as, at times, the way Bob [Robert H.] Finch was used as a counsellor to the President and Don [Donald H.] Rumsfeld was used as a counsellor to the President. Certainly the press secretary and Herb Klein, the public information-type people, whose job it is to disseminate information. But the people that are part of the process of decision-making I believe should not be public people and should not be enunciating either their views or the President's views in any public way. Because they've got to function, as staff people, as honest brokers between the varying views within the administration. I think some of this relates to the present Iran-Contra crisis kind of problem. You had advocates instead of brokers. And I believe a staff person must be a broker, not an advocate, unless he's brought in on staff as

an advocate--which we had some people who were. Pat [Daniel Patrick] Moynihan was an advocate on the staff. He was brought in to advocate a particular viewpoint. And that was fine, because he took that role, and he fought for it as an advocate and was understood to be doing so. But, by the same token, John Ehrlichman was not an advocate, he was a broker. He was brought in to broker the Moynihan versus [Arthur F.] Burns, or Moynihan versus [Bryce N.] Harlow, or Moynihan versus Finch, or whatever it might be, and not to have a view of his own. And the ultimate of that was my role I believed, and believe. And the chief of staff or senior staff person, however he might be designated, must be, in my view, anonymous and not have a view. [He may] have a view to the President, if it's a field in which he has expertise. I knew a lot about the field of higher education, having been on the Board of Regents of the University of California and the coordinating council and that sort of thing, and I did speak out on substance in discussions on education. I did not speak out on substance in issues of foreign policy, and Henry knew that and respected that.

On the other hand, when Henry wanted an airplane and he couldn't have it, as George Shultz cried about on television--that rang a familiar bell [laughter]--and I went through that a lot oftentimes--or wanted a car to pick Jill St. John up at the airport, he didn't always get it, because it wasn't proper, it wasn't procedurally acceptable. That made him mad. I don't blame him, but he didn't blame me for the decision, either. He knew exactly what was happening, I feel. Anyhow, Henry's

conversations with the President--well, Henry became gradually a public figure. And that wasn't all his fault. He loved being it, but the President edged him into it, as we needed to get our viewpoint on Vietnam issues--we were covering a ticklish thing here, because we were running two tracks, the public track and the secret track for the negotiations. The President was determined to end the war by negotiation that was not harmful to the U.S. And those negotiations at times we thought were proceeding successfully. Henry was the trigger man on those, primarily. And a lot of what was going on in the negotiations was not known to the State Department, was not known to anybody else. And a lot of it was. It was working both ways. But there became speculation and statements, both by Congressmen, Senators, and in the press that were making it difficult to negotiate, because they were undercutting--unknowingly--undercutting the position that we had already established. And so it became important for some of what we were doing to be known at times, and we came into the controlled-leak kind of process, and Henry was the prime source on the controlled leaks--and almost always at the President's direction. There were times when he leaked--and the tapes show it--leaked things that were not at the President's direction, and there were times when he made statements, the climactic one of them being his statement to [James] Scotty Reston that he had opposed the Christmas bombing in Vietnam, which is utterly absurd. There was no more ardent advocate of the Christmas bombing than Henry Kissinger, and I think the tapes show that.

But that's the kind of thing I meant. Henry, as he first was a controlled leak at the direction of the President, then became a controlled leak at his own initiative, then became--at the direction of the President--a spokesman at times. He was the briefer after a negotiating session or after a state visit or presidential summit meeting, or something like that. And then he became a character in his own right, because Henry has got great stage appeal and presence. And that's when, I think, the problem started arising of Henry's ego coming into play. And he was loving the limelight--and it's clear that he was--and he became concerned with his own image. He also was always sensitive, once he became the known spokesman instead of just the backgrounder that was never known, of his image within the academic community and within the diplomatic community. And in that respect, that probably led to the Christmas bombing thing. I mean, he wanted that side of the world to think that he was opposed to it. He wanted the luxury of having his cake and eating it too. And that kind of thing disturbed the President greatly, naturally, and so there were flaps. There were lots of that kind of thing at varying levels of importance. And also--Henry said to me, I think--isn't he quoted somewhere as having, by him, as having said that he was concerned about the release of the tapes because--or no, he said it to someone else, not to me.

FJG: Ehrlichman.

HRH: To Ehrlichman. He said, "I'm concerned about the release of the tapes because they will show that we sat there while the President said all these terrible things, and, by our silence,

presumably acquiesced." That's one area of concern. But let me--as you know perfectly well, having heard the tapes, there's a much deeper area of concern for Henry, which is that he didn't sit there and silently acquiesce. He vocally subscribed and frequently instigated some of those things. And that's--those are the things that I was referring to, that I felt would disturb him. And the reason--now I may have done the same thing, and others may have done the same thing, but there's no one who has achieved a higher distinction by reason of his association with President Nixon than Henry Kissinger--solely by reason of his association with President Nixon--and who cares as much about it [Haldeman laughter]--that distinction--as Henry does, and about history, and is knowledgable about it and all that, and his role in it and his importance as a Nobel Peace Prize winner, and all this sort of thing, you know. When you add it all up--I have said to people, and I don't know whether I've said it publicly or not, that I wasn't really concerned about the release of the tapes in their totality as far as I personally was concerned, because the worst that you'd find about me has already has been revealed, pretty much, and if there's any more, no one's going to care much about it, because they've already hammered me down [laughter] to the point where I'm not an interesting target anymore--for destruction. There are some interesting targets left for destruction. Henry Kissinger is primest among them, in my opinion. There are a lot of people who would love to sink Henry Kissinger as far as they could sink him--in the press, people in the press. Those people, I felt, were going to have a

field day in the tapes. There are other people--lots of other people who are going to have, in my view, serious problems with the tapes, George Shultz being a primary one among them.

FJG: Why?

HRH: Same reasons. Not in the dissembling sense, because Shultz I think is so straight-arrow that, you know, whatever he said inside he said outside, and thought and believed, and, you know--where Henry is much more sophisticated in his dealing with things. And there'll be fi...--but it'll--I think it's going to be tough for a lot of people, in terms of language used, comments made, things agreed to or disagreed with.

FJG: Who besides Shultz would you include in that?

HRH: Well, primest--I would put ahead--way ahead of Shultz I would put Haig. I think if the tapes are released before Haig has his fling at the presidency--which I don't believe has far to go, anyway--I think that they'd sink it without a trace. I don't think that's going to make any difference. But Haig has got some real problems, I would think. And Henry's has got some real problems, I would believe, in some of Haig's conversations with the President--some very real problems.

RHG: Are Haig's problems similar to Kissinger's--dissembling, and....

HRH: I think probably. Some of that I'm going on speculation, because, interestingly, I was very rarely in a conversation, I believe--very rarely in a conversation with Haig and the President. I don't have the feeling--I was in lots of them with Henry and the President. I don't have the feeling I was in very many--that I was in very few with Haig and the President. And

yet I know that Haig and the President had many conversations, often when Henry was away. And often Haig would come in and talk--if you had taped my office, you'd find some fascinating conversations with Haig, because Haig would come in and talk with me about problems with Henry. And in some of those, based on our conversations, I know that he talked with the President, either before--either I told him to or advised him to, or he told me he already had talked with the President about the same thing.

So....

FJG: What sorts of problems were these?

HRH: Personal. I think you know what I mean [laughter].

FJG: I do.

HRH: And I assume some of those will, and should be, removed from the tapes before the tapes are made public, because they are personal, and legitimately personal. But in that role you have to deal with personal problems. They are real problems, even though they're personal, and they're not valid for public consumption, although I guess diagrams of the President's colon are considered important for public consumption. So maybe everything is. I don't know.

FJG: OK. Well, yesterday we talked a little bit about your taping system, and I wondered if you would mind going over that again, about how your system of making recordings worked--your ability to phone in....

HRH: OK, I'll go over it for this record, but I'm going to take it out. I don't want that released until I've decided what I'm going to do in terms of my own publication of material from those

tapes, but I'll cover it for now, and hold it here.

And I have not made any secret of it. There are people that know, so that the fact of the existence of what I did [is known]. I did keep, at the President's instruction and desire, a concurrent diary, log, or whatever you want to call it, of my days at the White House. I started out by doing this in a written log and shifted at the end of 1969 to dictating into a tape recorder. For the historical record the President asked that I dictate, or keep, a record of the events of the day from my viewpoint and my opinions of them. I was so absorbed in getting things done that I didn't do a very good job of that in terms certainly of the opinion part of it. And it's been terribly frustrating to people like Bill [William L.] Safire who have talked with me about this [and said] that, you know, that I should be doing this--he talked with me at the White House. Because it became clear to him and Dick [Richard] Moore and other people that there was no question [but that] I was being exposed to an awful lot that no one else was being exposed to. And I had the context of exposure across the board, which no one else had, that enabled me to read into a meeting with Ehrlichman, let's say, some things that Ehrlichman couldn't read into it, because he hadn't been in the meeting with Finch prior to that, or the meeting with Kissinger, or whatever it might have been. Or, hadn't sat and talked with the President before or after these meetings as to what he really was going to try and accomplish in this meeting. The President dissembles a great deal. He goes at things indirectly. He gains views and opinions and advice by

statements that are leading statements, that don't--that appear to reflect a viewpoint, but don't necessarily. And you can see that, you can confirm that within the tapes by seeing how he espouses one view in one meeting and a quite different view in the next meeting with equal passion. And a lot of--that's part of a process that he uses to test and poke around. He tries out things to see what kinds of reaction he gets. He may try out the same thing on different ranges of people, or he may try out different things on different ranges, to try to come to a conclusion.

And--anyway, I did do this [keep a diary]. I find in going back over this material in a scanty fashion, which is all I've done, that I didn't do very much in terms of my own opinion, but I did manage to get down a pretty good run on some of the interesting things that took place within the administration. And those logs and tapes, as we get further into the years [of the Nixon presidency]--I think I probably did a better job on them. And when I started taping rather than writing, I'm sure I did a better job, because it was a lot easier to get material, just like I'm doing now. It's much easier for me to talk and let a tape recorder worry about getting it on paper than for me to sit and try to write it out. I just--I have a problem with doing that, and I certainly did at that time, because I did these at night after I got--I did them at home and I did them at night after I got home from work, normally. I tried to do them every night, and usually did. There were times when I'd miss a night and then catch up the next day, but I rarely went more than a day

or so past the time.

And I made the strategic error from my viewpoint of taking that material into the White [House]. I was concerned about keeping it at home because I felt that--I thought it was much more sensitive than it is, at least in the early stages. Some of it got sensitive in later stages. I didn't want it lying around, and I didn't have secure storage facilities at home--didn't want to bother with secure storage facilities at home so I--as a matter of fact I guess I did have a safe at home, but I don't think I ever used it. But anyway, I took these into the White House. Although I was not, under our regulations for classifying material, qualified to classify the material, I wrote "Top Secret" on all of them--"Top Secret, Sensitive"--and had them stored in the vault in the Staff Secretary's office in the basement of the West Wing, with orders that no one was to listen to them, that they were to be just put in there and held. Unfortunately, they were all still there at the time that-- unsuspecting, unknowing to me--my office was secured and all of its contents were unlawfully--what's the word?

RHG: Sealed?

HRH: No.

FJG: Sequestered?

HRH: Well, "stolen" is a good word [laughter]. It's not the word. No, they--like commandeered, or something. I use the word usually; it should've just come out. Anyway, all of my stuff was taken. And I, after some time and effort, managed to retrieve most of my personal material. This I regarded as personal

material, and legally I am advised that it clearly is. But it was still kept. And so I started legal proceedings to try to recover the material and also to sue for damages for unlawful seizure. And in the process of that legal action, I negotiated a settlement with the Archivist, by which I deeded the materials to the United States, to the Archives [National Archives and Records Administration] with the proviso that they not be released for a fixed period of time and that I would receive copies of all of the material. Unfortunately, my zeal in protecting the material turned around and bit me in the rear end, because [Haldeman laughter] the copies that I received had substantial portions removed because they were required to be put through the national security clearance process, and these portions were deemed to be "Top Secret" and were removed from the copies that I got. So I'm not allowed to read writings that I wrote or listen to tapes that I dictated because I don't have--didn't have a top secret clearance to listen to them. I hope that those materials, when properly processed--as the Archives are clearly doing in other cases, and they need to be properly processed because there is substantial personal reference in there that needs to be...

FJG: We have not done that yet.

HRH: ...properly taken care of, and when the time comes for release of these materials that processing will be done. I think they'll be of interest and value to historians. There is material in there that doesn't appear elsewhere. My intent was, and still is, prior to the release of that material, to utilize the material to get down in writing in some form--and hopefully published in some

form--the things that--I don't know how to define it. I feel that I have an obligation to the historical record to get down in preserved historical record as much as I can of what I know and what I believe, based on my unique position. I don't--I'm not an historian and I'm not a writer, so I don't want to try to do another book that's a definitive history of the Nixon--of the first term. Because I don't see--I think others can do a much better job of that. The materials available are so incredibly voluminous that people are going to be doing that for the next century, and doing it better than I can. But there are some unique areas in putting some of those things together that in retrospect I realize no one can do in the same way that I can because they don't have the totality of exposure and the depth of understanding of the man. I think there's no question I spent more hours with the man than anybody else did during his first term, and in the campaign and the pre-election period, the transition period--I don't mean pre-election, pre-inaugural period--[more time] than anyone else did, and out of that [I] have some insights and knowledge of how he works and thinks, and how some of those other people work and think. I worked not only very closely with him, but I worked more closely with each of the other people than any one person did with all of them. Ehrlichman worked more closely with Shultz than I did, but I worked more closely with Shultz than anybody other than the people that worked immediately with him did. And you combine that with Shultz, Kissinger, [Caspar W.] Weinberger, Ehrlichman, Harlow, Moynihan, Arthur Burns--some of the fascinating

characters of the Nixon Presidency and really outstanding people, incredible people. There's some stuff I ought to be able to put together. It's a difficult thought for me, because I'm not disciplined or personally inclined to doing that kind of thing, but I am going to make an effort to do it, and I think I've got to, I think I should.

RHG: I might say, this is a good way to do it--to do it through oral history. An institution can prepare a transcript for you. Someone else can edit out--edit things, and....

HRH: Well, it may be. It may be. The problem with doing it with an oral history is that it's--maybe that is the best way to do it. I need to take a lot of time. We're going through a few specific things. What really is needed here is some--I need to explore--I need to go back, saturate myself in this stuff again, work--I think from my diaries, I think, is the best starting point for me, but--to try to get, you know, in some way into a thing that recalls all those things that are fourteen to eighteen years in the past now. I think a lot of it I can. A lot of it I can't. Fortunately, what I can is my opinions and my knowledge of the people, and I need to be questioned on that by knowledgeable people, I guess, and maybe an oral history is the best way for that to be done--to do it. That's why I found those presidential seminars, the Princeton seminar and the San Diego thing and the upcoming Hofstra thing, to be of some interest, because they do force some recall and put it into context. I think Hofstra may be more interesting from my viewpoint than the others in a way because it's totally focused on Nixon.

RHG: This is a kind of thing we could continue over quite a long period.

HRH: [Laughs]

RHG: Because, I mean, seriously, come out to California once in a while--I go out there once a year--come out with a tape recorder and spend a couple of hours.

HRH: I've got it now. He's figured out a way to get to Santa Barbara at government expense! Good for you!

FJG: It's at his own expense.

RHG: It's part of my vacation.

FJG: We'll give him administrative time, administrative leave<sup>(c)</sup>

RHG: We don't have any money, the government never has any money.

FJG: They keep telling us there's never any travel money, although it turns out we do have some now that--since Ehrlichman has agreed to start an oral history project with us--and we just had one interview yesterday. He's agreed to do another one in November, when he's back in town...

HRH: Really?

FJG: ...you know, we're hoping now that with you and with other people we can begin to do a series of interviews with each one of you, over a period of time, to develop the full context of the administration, essentially doing exactly what you said you want to do. The facts of what happened are there in the documents. The color, the opinions, the working relationships--that does not appear in the documents, and that's what we try to get at.

HRH: See, the other thing I want to do, and I think it's a proper desire, is to get--and maybe the oral history is a step towards

it--is to get this put together in a fashion that I can publish over my name, rather than as an oral history, which is a research document--but rather get to a reading document that will have some appeal for public consumption, get to something that doesn't come out under the historical banner, but comes out with the appeal and the marketing push and so forth of a published document over my name.

FJG: Your oral history is your property, and when you read the deed of gift you will understand that you may do with it as you please. And if you wish to use it as an aid in publishing a book and restrict portions of it until the book comes out, that is your choice.

HRH: See, that's probably what I should do. What I should do is work on the basis of trying to get something published first, and once it's published, then, using the oral history as the footnotes [slight laughter]--I mean seriously, I mean, I can say in the publication--and I'm just talking aloud, but I can get to, I would think, some kind of a thing where I say--express my appreciation to the United States Archives on the basis that, through the materials they hold and the oral history that they've done, this book has evolved and, you know, sort of sums up--I guess what I'm after is trying to make a final statement from me about my years with President Nixon that sums up what I learned, what I think, and all that, and then has backed up--I've always felt the diaries were ultimately going to be available as backup to that for the serious historian who wants to go behind some of the things I say. But I think I still need to coalesce it and

bring it into--I guess what I'm saying is, a statement by me rather than a historical document--a statement that then is backed up by the historical documentation, rather than footnoting the statement ad nauseum, making it impossible to read--leave that out and let the person who cares--which is not, I mean--that's what's always bothered me about footnotes in many books. Most of the people who read the books don't care about the footnotes, and, if there were a way to not have to go back and forth--which of course they do now, they put the footnotes in the back, and just do the--for the reference.

RHG: I was just thinking, if, as you say, you are not inclined to produce such a document--you want to, but you're not inclined to--maybe the best way to do it is in conversation, as with this sort of enterprise. Then the National Archives has the benefit of your oral history and provides you with transcripts. Then you can then take that and select the parts that you would like to go into your testament, and maybe you could hire someone to edit...

HRH: Yeah.

RHG: ...the parts and to produce a final publishable document. It just....

HRH: Let me ask you this: would it be doable to do that with my representative sitting in on the questioning also?

FJG: Yes.

HRH: In other words, if I was going to have someone edit, or work with me on trying to prepare it from a literary viewpoint, it would be useful to have that person sit in and ask questions also, which might--they'd be looking at it from a different viewpoint than

you would be, and therefore would be asking a different kind of question, but it would get all that into the oral history, too.

FJG: We have no problem with that.

HRH: See, I would like to get all this onto the public record. Some of it may have to be removed because of what I say or how I say it, but in general, I would like to get it all onto the public record, but I would like to get my own statement and summary of it on the public record first, so that its--because I think that it will have--I know it will have broader appeal. People aren't going to come to the Archives and read oral histories, except those who are very seriously interested. You're going to have maybe dozens, maybe even hundreds over the years coming to the Archives, where I can get thousands and maybe even millions to read a book or to use the book as a springboard for other things that they do. That's what I'd like to do, because I feel the book that I wrote is not--and I've said that, I don't know whether I said it in the forward to the book or not; I say it in the afterword to the paperback edition--that I'm disappointed in a lot of what was the result of that book. Because first of all, it was heavily spiced-up by a co-author hired by the publisher in order to make it salable, and it succeeded. The book went very well as far as sales were concerned, and that accomplished one of my objectives at that time, which was I had to make some money. I had a negative net worth and a huge legal fee hanging over my head that I had to get myself out from under. I don't have the financial problem any more, so I don't have to worry about financial returns, and the next book that I do will not be

dictated in its format or content by a publisher and co-author. It will be dictated by me, and it will say what I want to say the way I want to say it, in terms of trying to get on the record the things that I know and think that I think are unique to me, and skip the stuff that is--I mean, some of what we're covering here you have--is known in the historical record anyway. There's, you know--I may confirm it or add to it, but the value of this from what I would think would be the archival viewpoint as well as my own is what is added to what's on the [record]. There's no point in duplicating the existing record. The only value to you really is supplementing it.

FJG: That's right. That's the whole point.

RHG: I think, if this were to turn into a series of interviews, what we might do is have some correspondence with you preliminary to conducting an interview. We would say, "What is your agenda for this interview? What would you like to cover?" And you might think about it and say you want to talk about this office, and these personalities and this enterprise. And you'd tell us this, and then we'd probably go through the record and papers and try to prepare ourselves to ask you the questions that you want us to ask to draw you out.

FJG: Ordinarily, we would spend a month preparing for an oral history interview [with an individual of your historical importance]. I mean, we had twenty-four hours [to prepare for today's interview], and we're asking questions off the tops of our heads.

HRH: Yeah. Yeah.

FJG: And that's been fine. I can't tell you how pleased we are with

how this has been going. This is great. This is real good oral history that we've been doing.

HRH: Is it?

FJG: Yes.

HRH: Are we getting stuff that you don't already have somewhere?

RHG: Yes.

HRH: That's what bothers me is I....

FJG: Things that we don't already have or that are being put together in one place instead of scattered, and that's again [unintelligible].

HRH: That's the problem I have with working with my diary. Because it's chronological, it forces me into a chronological framework. And it's very hard for--I'm having it transcribed, and I'm having it put onto word processor disks, computer disks, because I have finally learned how to run a computer, so that I can work with it. So the transcriber is not even making hard copies. She's just putting it on disks, and then I punch up the disks and can play with them on my computer and run off my hard copies as I go, any way that I want. But I still--I find it's hard as the devil for me to categorize the stuff by subject, which you've done, I now find, which is marvelous. I can at least work with your subject guidance, in effect, and find a way of outlining and moving my stuff around to stack up all the stuff on subject A and subject B. But, that's still--that's difficult. If we could work towards a thing where we took specific subject areas and went into depth on subject A...

FJG: Right [unintelligible].

HRH: ...using the material that's in my diary and the material that's in the other record, and all that, that may open, from both our viewpoints--that may get much more into the Archives than you could possibly get any other way. [That is my point number] A. And B, it may get me the material I need in the format that I can do something with it. Because my biggest hurdle is just the logistic problem of sitting down at my computer and trying to make a book out of that diary. It's very hard to do, because I don't want to write a chronology. Now, one alternative is just to publish the diary, but that doesn't serve any useful purpose. I'd rather say the diary is available in the Archives, and that saves having to publish it, because 99% of my readers aren't going to care about it, anyway. And the 1% that do can come here and find out.

RHG: I think you probably--just a thought, would be to try to publish both, publish them together, "volume one" and "volume two."

HRH: I'd thought about that, too. I thought about doing my compilation, which maybe would be a, you know, two hundred page book, a feasible, readable book, not a thousand page volume that scares people to death, like Nixon's biographies did, or Kissinger's. I found that--I can't find anybody who's read either one.

FJG: I've read Nixon's; I've not read Kissinger's.

HRH: Well, I'm sure you have, but I mean out on the street--normal--I shouldn't say "normal" [laughter] people.

FJG: We have special interests in this, so we would read it.

HRH: Yeah. I'm talking about general public type people, but

intelligent, well-read, and interested people, and people who are interested in the Nixon administration. Say, "Have you read Kissinger's memoirs?" "No." "Have you read Nixon's memoirs?" "No, I've looked through them, I read some of the stuff." I haven't found anybody, including a lot of the people that were in the administration with us who have read either, let alone both. What I want to write is something that is not going to scare people to death, so they'll be willing to pick it up and read it in its entirety and get a summation of my--what I--I guess that's what I want to write is a summation of what I know and think. But the only way to get to the summation is to get the parts together in some form that I can sum.

FJG: Yes.

HRH: And they aren't there in what I've got available at this stage. So--and then, I thought about that--do the summation and also concurrently publish the Haldeman tapes as volume two. And the casual reader can buy volume one for a reasonable price and with reasonable weight and read it, and then the interested person can buy volume two.

RHG: Volume two would go to all the university libraries.

FJG: Yeah.

HRH: It would go to the university libraries, and some--I think it'd go to the bookstores in the first round, because I think--I know I'll be accused of capitalizing on my sins again, but that's not what I'm doing this time. But I do want a book that will sell, because books that sell are books that are read, and I'd like to have it read, I'd like to get something that's read. I would use

the book as a springboard for--I'd do the book promotion stuff. I've refused to do it on stuff up to now, but I'd do what Ehrlichman's doing and go around to the TV talk shows and do the stuff to make the book sell, and I think I could make a book--I think I could promote a book and make it sell.

FJG: No question about that.

HRH: And that, you know, I'd--it's intriguing to tie the oral history thing into it, because that solves--I hadn't even thought about it--it solves the other thing I would like, which is to go beyond what you've got, but get it in and available in the public record, but with the control so that I--if it's in the public record already, then people are going to come in and skim it, and it's going to take the luster off of what I want to try to get out for general readership. They'll do the little blips and that's it.

FJG: Right.

HRH: If I can time the thing so that I can get my thing out and then say your stuff is available, they can pick it up from there. The timing works perfectly for both of us. It also builds interest in the Archives, which I assume you're not averse to, either.

FJG: Never [laughter].

HRH: Interesting. Well, we wasted all our oral history time figuring out strategy.

RHG: No, we're making a future for the oral history program from our point of view, and from you<sup>r</sup> point of view we're establishing a symbiotic relationship.

FJG: As Ray and I would conceive of a future oral history program

with you, we would be focussing on whatever subjects you wished to discuss. You would say, "I want to talk about the White House staff," or whatever topics you wish. We would then prepare ourselves to talk with you about the White House staff: their functions, their interrelationships, that sort of thing. Watergate would probably be no more than just--get that out of the way in one session, or something like that. Whatever subjects you want to talk about, and there are others that we might suggest to you, that researchers have asked us about.

HRH: See, I wanted to do--I started to do a book originally, during my interim period, when I was in the hearings and appeals process and all that when I couldn't do anything, I couldn't work, and I had time, because I had finished all my preparation and all. I wanted to do a general book on just what I'm talking about. No publisher would talk to me about it, because all they wanted was Watergate, because all I was to the world at that time was Watergate. And they said, you know, "You doing a book on the Nixon four year presidency would be almost as interesting as you doing a book on antique porcelain," or something. It just wasn't there. I had to get through the Watergate hurdle to do the other. Now, that other book [The Ends of Power] is going to have to have done that [covered Watergate]. I'm going to leave it. I'm going to say, "While I don't"--maybe I've got to sum that up a little bit, but I've got to--I want to get past that and, and the book I do--I want to put Watergate in perspective. I don't want it to occupy any more number of pages or emphasis in the final--in this book than it did in my term at the White House,

and that was, you know, three months out of forty-eight or fifty...

FJG: Well, I think that's the point of an oral history project....

HRH: ...so maybe it's entitled to 6% of the book's pages. If I've got two hundred pages, it gets twelve; that's it.

FJG: There are reams of materials that exist about your role in Watergate, transcripts of your testimony all over the place. Almost nobody ever talks about anything else that happened...

HRH: Exactly.

FJG: ...and I think the time has come--certainly Enrichman agrees with this--to talk about what else happened in the Nixon administration.

HRH: Exactly. That's what I want to leave in this testament that I'm doing--that I feel I need to do. I want to leave all the other stuff on the record, because we did some great things, we had some great approaches, we had some marvelous people. And those need to be brought back into the framework. And I think the world is ready for them now, where it wasn't [before].

FJG: Hm hmm.

HRH: It's interesting, you know, when I was going to do the original book, John Toland--does that name ring a bell?

RHG: Yes.

HRH: The Pulitzer Prize-winning....

FJG: Eminent historian.

HRH: Hmm?

FJG: Eminent historian.

HRH: Yeah, eminent historian. He's done stuff on...

FJG: On Japan.

HRH: ...Japan, The\_Rising\_Sun. He has a Japanese wife, which is why he's focused on Japan. But he did stuff on [Adolf] Hitler and [Albert] Speer and some of the Hitler people. He seemed like a good person for me to work with, because he had worked with sort of historical villains, which at that time I was, but in a broader context. And I had some interesting talks with him, and he agreed to do it, to co-write a book with me. I started with [James A.] Michener, and Michener got interested for a while, and then he said, no, he didn't really want to do it. He was too involved with his book on sports at that time. And I think he just didn't--I know he found me very distasteful [laughter], and I think that's what did it. But anyway, Toland said yes; we signed up; we had everything worked [out]. And we'd had some long sessions and he was setting up a program to move to California, and we were going to go through all this and all. And then I get this pathetic letter from him, and he says, "I have come to the conclusion that I cannot do it. It is with terrible regret that I am withdrawing from the project. My reason is that I am an historian; I am not a journalist. And you are a subject of journalistic interest, not historic interest at this point. And the passions of the moment are still too great. And as an historian, I find I can't deal with the passions of the moment, I can only deal with the objectivity of the past."

RHG: When was this?

HRH: In probably--it was probably before--I'm not sure, '73, '74--it was before I went to prison.

RHG: Quite a good while ago then.

HRH: And it was after--I don't know whether it was after I was convicted or not, after the trial--it was probably after the trial but before prison. It was during the appeals process. The trial ended in what? January 1975 was the conviction.

[END OF REEL 2]

[BEGIN REEL 3]

RHG: The question we were talking about here before we turned the machine on was your coming to understand Nixon. You wanted to work with him, and you spent a lot of time trying to understand who he was and how to work with him, and you were telling us when this started and then some of the things that happened.

HRH: Trying to figure Nixon out started really the first instant of my exposure to him, which was in 195[~~date not completed~~]-I'd met him in his office back in the early '50s when he was Senator. In '56 I had signed on as a volunteer to be an advance man in the campaign for re-election as Vice President. And my first real exposure to Nixon was at the [Republican National] Convention in San Francisco, when [Harold] Stassen was trying to dump him [from the vice presidential spot] and there was a question of whether [Dwight D.] Eisenhower was trying to dump him, and all that sort of thing, and his father was ill, and he went down to visit his parents and came back up to San Francisco, and all. As a new recruit advance man for the forthcoming campaign I was allowed into the outer fringes of the inner circle [Haldeman laughter], so to speak, at the convention in San Francisco. It was my first real exposure to him. I saw the guy up close and in the flesh,

and watched him working groups of delegates, and all that kind of stuff that they have to go through at the convention. I found it an astonishing process. And then, during the campaign, I did advance stops, and when he was on the stop that I advanced, I was in control of him, basically. And I got to see him in all kinds of different situations as a result of that--to talk with him directly and that sort of thing, which I had never done before.

It dawned on me that here was a person that was clearly a different kind of person. And I had sort of had in my own mind the "exceptional man" theory anyway. There are people who are clearly head and shoulders different than the run of ordinary mortals, and I really think there are. And it became clear that [Nixon] was one of them. And the exposure through him to Eisenhower made it clear that Eisenhower was one of them, to me. And obviously historically their mystique adds to that, but some people have the mystique without the unusualness, not often. Others, I guess, have the unusualness of the exceptional man thing without the mystique. I think there are some business leaders probably that do. I worked with him in later campaigns, and then very closely in the '60 campaign because I was campaign tour manager and, as such, I was responsible for all the advance men, but I stayed with the candidate all the time, and I was within a few feet of Richard Nixon's body day and night through the entire year of the 1960 campaign, and consequently, [I] could really watch the cycle of operational phenomena of the man, and started figuring then--and also watching the staff relationships and the coming and goings of the Bob Finches and the Bob [Robert

L.] Kings and the Jim [James E.] Bassetts, and the--oh, I don't know--there was a whole horde of them that had been in and out. And I tried to figure out, you know, why--obviously, this is a guy who burns up people.

And I found--interestingly by comparison, I ran in, over my career subsequent to my exposure to Nixon--I'd never run into anybody prior to it that I'd classified as the uncommon man or the exceptional man, whatever you want to say--afterwards, I ran into, directly, two others that I worked with very closely. One was Walt Disney. And I worked with--he was a client of mine in the advertising agency. We handled Disney Productions. And as a result of my work on the Board of Regents [of the University of California] and my work with him in a business sense, Walt asked me to come on the board of directors of the California Institute of the Arts [CalArts], which he was founding. And I did, and, when he died, I succeeded him as chairman of the board of CalArts for a while. It was a unique concept of bringing together a music school, a fine arts school, and a dramatic school, and a film production thing, and a design and commercial art thing--trying to bring all those disciplines together and mix them in an institution where they would mix, and it's worked out very well. CalArts is a helluva institution now. When I worked with Walt, it became clear to me that Walt was an exceptional person, in this framework that I've talked about. And then, in recent years with David Murdock, a financier, entrepreneur, developer in Los Angeles, who's become a billionaire from never having graduated from high school. And it's a--again, this same kind of person, a

truly unique individual.

And there are common threads among these people, and I found that Nixon was sort of the epitome of them. Studying him made studying the other two kind of interesting and easy. Which is-- he had no interest in training people. He had no interest in managing. He had no interest in any of the skills of management that I as a businessman and a business manager was aware of and trying to develop and learning about--had learned about in school, in college, and then in executive programs, in the Harvard advanced management program, that kind of thing. And I realized these are people who think great thoughts and have great abilities, but don't have either the inclination or the discipline, the desire or the ability, to manage them--to manage the processes. And they need someone to manage things for them. Walt Disney had it in his brother Roy. David Murdock never did have it and still doesn't. I thought I might be able to fill that role, and I spent seven years with him trying to develop that, based on my experience with Nixon and with Disney, and never could do it, because he wasn't--he never came to the point of recognizing he had to have it, where Disney I don't think ever consciously recognized it, but subliminally did, and because Roy was there and a brother and totally trusted, and all that, Roy emerged in that role with Walt. Nixon, I don't think until the loss in 1960, ever recognized that he had to have it or that there was a lack there.

I think the loss in '60 to Kennedy really did bring about in many ways a new Nixon. He--the defeat was shattering, number

one. The defeat in '62 was even more shattering, because it was more disgraceful. I mean, he lost to Pat [Edmund G.] Brown, a man for whom he didn't have overriding respect. He liked him. Pat Brown is a very likable guy. But he didn't--I think he felt it was disgraceful that he lost to Pat Brown, and he lost by a big margin, and that he found really disgraceful, as a politician. He should have never run for Governor of California, which I argued right up to the moment he stepped on the stage to announce he was running, because he didn't want to be governor. That was my reason for his not running. The reason he did run for governor was because he wanted to be President, and Len [Leonard] Hall and Dwight Eisenhower both told him that he had to run for governor to maintain a political base--he had to be governor to maintain a political base to later run for President. And that's why he did it. I still think it was a mistake.

But anyway, those two losses really got to him. After the loss for governor, he came back to New York and went into the law business, and for the first time in his life he made money, which he had never done before--I mean real money--and he dealt with the big shots of the world, the money and finance and power bigshots of the world and the nation, not as a political phenomenon--Vice President--but as one of them, a high-level corporate lawyer. Now admittedly he didn't do a lot of law work. He did for some, but not a lot. And he was still going off his vice presidential mystique. He gained an enormous amount of inner confidence during that period that he didn't have before. There was incredible self-doubt, and I saw that in Walt Disney

and David Murdock later, too. It was there. Someone needs to deal with that self-doubt. Well, Nixon overcame a lot of it. He also realized--I don't know whether consciously or not but it became a conscious realization--like the old adage that the lawyer who handles his own case has a damn fool for a client, the politician who manages his own campaign has a damn fool for a client also, for a candidate. Because a politician can't run his own campaign. But Nixon had. He ran the '60 campaign. Len Hall and Bob Finch were co-managers, and all they did was carry out Nixon's management instructions. But he had no management skill, and the campaign was not well-managed because of that.

In 1968, when he did decide to run for President, he recognized that he was not going to run the campaign. He was going to be the candidate. And he by then had acquired an enormous respect for John Mitchell, his law partner, for Mitchell's political acumen, not just legal, and [his] just plain solid, down-to-earth street smarts and wisdom. And he--Mitchell was a contemporary, Mitchell was a man that Nixon saw as a peer, in age to a degree--I guess Mitchell's a little younger than Nixon, but not much, they're in the same age area--where all of us were young guys to Nixon. The Finches and the Haldemans and the Kleins and the Bassetts and all those people were younger, and they were inferiors. They were staff people. Just like a congressional staff or anything else, they're different. He saw Mitchell as an equal in all kinds of ways: social, economic, business, power, wisdom, political acumen, the whole thing. So he was willing to accept Mitchell, he was willing to turn over to

Mitchell the management of the campaign. And he did. But then you got to the problem of the management of the candidate. And he was not willing [to turn this over to Mitchell], because Mitchell didn't know anything about campaigning. He knew about politics from his bond lawyer's experience, which is basically political. But he didn't know about campaigning--about making speeches and setting up rallies and issuing press releases and all the stuff of campaigning. I did. I had run that whole thing in 1960, and I had spent enough time with Nixon during the meantime, and I had achieved some stature. I was a vice president of J. Walter Thompson Co., managing an office, building a good business up from a small business. I was a regent of the University of California, I was on the board of trustees of CalArts, I was doing a number of these things that gave me some stature. Nixon saw me in a new light, to a degree. And so we worked out the thing. I wasn't going to go into the 1968 campaign, but we worked out the thing on the basis of my coming in--Mitchell as campaign manager--and I coming in as what we finally decided the title [should be], because we had to figure some designation for it--chief of staff to the candidate. And my job was to run the candidate, while Mitchell's job was to run the campaign. And Mitchell and I were to coordinate together the necessary mix of the candidate and the campaign, which is what we did.

And that forced me to coalesce my earlier experience and thinking. I hadn't met Murdock at that time, but I had been doing work with Disney. And I had the theory and the knowledge

of Nixon, and to a degree the knowledge of Disney, which I brought together in trying to figure out, "How do I deal with this man?"--who he is clearly--you can't follow books on management theory and deal with him, and yet you have got to accomplish the results that the books on management theory are designed to tell you how to accomplish. So, I had to figure out how we keep him out of the nuts and bolts--the training, the per[sonnel]--he was also not a good judge of personnel. He brought in some good people and some lousy people. And if you look at the range of people that he's had on his staffs--and I'm not going to identify which ones I think are which but there's some--over the years and as President there were some just outstandingly, sensationally brilliant, able, valuable people, and there were also some people that it was hard to figure how they got there, how they fit in at all. I know it's fashionable in the academic world to put me in that latter category, because I had no, presumably--and I've seen that in some of this new current stuff on Iran-Contra stuff when they're analyzing White House staff--that I had no political experience. I had never been elected to political office and that sort of thing. Therefore I wasn't competent to deal with this. I totally reject that argument, as naturally I would, I guess, on the basis that--in the first place I had had incredible political experience. I had spent one year of my life managing a presidential campaign tour, travelling with the candidate every hour of the day and night for a year. I had spent another year of my life doing the same thing for a candidate for governor of the largest state in

the Union--it happened to be the same guy. I had spent three-month segments in '56 and '58 running advance operations for a candidate for Vice President in '56 and a Vice President of the United States campaigning for congressional candidates in '58. I had had an enormous amount of campaign experience. I had had no government experience, true. But the guy I worked for, the President that I came in to work for, had had more government experience than anybody ever to come to the office of President. He had served in the Congress, in the Senate, and as Vice President of the United States for eight years. He didn't need someone there with government experience, and that's the thing these people overlook. They say, "Haldeman was no good as chief of staff, [Donald] Regan was no good as chief of staff, because he had no government experience." The chief of staff--[Ronald] Reagan's chief of staff did need government experience at the federal level, in my opinion, and that's why some of the people who served him in that role, notably Jim [James A.] Baker--well, I guess Baker hadn't had government experience, had he?

FJG: I don't think so.

HRH: So, that was wrong. In my view, Reagan should have brought in a chief of staff who had good experience at the federal level.

RHG: Such as he has now.

HRH: Maybe. I would not argue that his present chief of staff [Howard Baker] is the right person. Even though he had good experience at the federal level, he did not have any executive experience or administrative experience or management experience at any level. He was a creature of Congress, which means a creature of

compromise and conciliation, which is a valuable tool in governing, but is absolutely the wrong training for running the White House staff. And I think the fact that Baker has now-- Howard Baker has now fallen out of favor by everyone who said he was the greatest choice the President could've made is indicating that. It's no reflection on his ability in one area, but it is a recognition of his total lack of background as a manager either of an individual, which he's got to be, or of an operation, which he's also got to be. I had had experience as manager of an individual, in terms of managing Richard Nixon--the individual who became President--vast experience doing that. Also, I had had had experience managing an organization, at J. Walter Thompson Co. and then on the Board of [Regents of] the University of California, one of the hugest administrative organizations in the world, other than federal-type things. So, I think I was extremely well-qualified for that job for that President. Reagan needed someone who had--now Reagan had had administrative experience as Governor of California. And he had communication experience, obviously. But he did have--he had no federal experience, and he needed, in my view, a chief of staff who was knowledgable in the federal government and in management. Baker is knowledgable in [the] federal government [but] not in management, so he misses one of the two required necessities. Nixon didn't need someone knowledgable in the federal government because he was totally knowledgable himself. He knew exactly what he wanted done, and where, and why, and all that--throughout the bureaucracy, the Congress, the press, the media, the

agencies, everything. So he had--he didn't need someone like that. He needed someone who could manage him and someone who could manage the staff under him, and that I think I was singularly well-qualified for.

RHG: Can you think of a few examples, or episodes, incidents that were important to you in your education of who Richard Nixon was and what Richard Nixon needed?

HRH: Well, countless things in terms of watching the man operate in a campaign, which I'd done a lot of. And, I'd travelled with him after '60 and before he decided to run in '62. He was living in California. And I travelled with him when he was the former Vice President, and he was doing some public appearances and that kind of thing and was writing--I went through the agony of writing a book with him in Six Crises, which he did in that period in California. And that sort of thing, so it was a matter of watching him deal with problems, trying to see how he got things done and recognizing that he wanted to say, "I want this done." He didn't care how it was done, but then he'd get into the process, because he was testing to see if someone else knew how to do it. And he'd ask you questions about--I'm lousy at coming up with anecdotes, and I'm trying to brew one up here. Offhand, I don't think of any, but I probably will maybe as I go along. I'll try to catch them as I go. And keep asking that, because that is important, and, I don't--they aren't at the top of my thing, and I've got to get myself back in a story-telling mode and get into the anecdotal stuff, because that's valuable in understanding what--in verifying the thing that I'm saying.

But on campaigns, for instance, I watched how speeches were written. When he was going to make a speech, he would--he had staff speech writers, or a key writer, at least, on the campaign, and he'd say to that guy, "We've got to do a speech on farm policy. The things I want to cover in it are: I don't believe in this, I don't believe in that, we've got to get rid of that, we've got to stop doing this, but we need to protect this, add to this, produce this." In other words, he'd tick off a series of requirements the speech had to cover, that were really a summary of what his belief was on that policy statement. Then he'd say, "Work that up." And of course, the speech writer would know from his previous speeches and all that the substance of what he'd want to say. But then Nixon, at the same time, would sit down with a long yellow pad, and he'd start writing stuff down himself thinking--and we'd get spare moments on the plane during the campaign, when you're flying from one city to the next. He'd sit down with that damn yellow pad and write and write and write, pages and pages and pages of stuff, which were his notes on what--because he was always saying, well let's say he's focussing now on the farm speech, he's getting down bits and pieces, not necessarily organized, but just spewing, forcing himself to work out--"These are the things I want." Then the writer would produce some of his stuff, and Nixon would play with it. And he wouldn't like it and he'd say, "We've got to get a new speech writer, because, you know, this guy doesn't know--doesn't understand what I'm trying to say at all." Then you'd send it back, and he'd talk with the writer and say, "No, no. You've

missed the point. Here's what I want to get." Then he'd call me in and say, you know, "This guy is a lost cause."

His thing was--which I found common to all these people--he did not train people, he did not develop people, and he really didn't even select people well. What he did was use people--and I don't say that in a pejorative sense. I say it in my belief [in] a perfectly proper sense. And that gets to one of the Watergate things--that my friends, as contrasted to his, have criticized me for being used by Nixon and being had by him--and why was I so stupid as to do it? That was my whole role, and I clearly recognized it, going in--was to be used by him. That's what he did, he used people. And in the White House context that's OK, because you aren't building an organization. You're putting together--you're creating, not building--instantly creating, in the seventy-five days of the transition, an organization that's got to be ready to go on January 20 and has got to be productive from that day forward, and is only going to last four years or, at the maximum, eight years. So there isn't an opportunity for long-range development that you'd see in a corporation, where you recruit kids from college, you put them in at the lower levels or expose them--you have various training processes. I saw the White House thing, and his job, as not being a training thing. I saw it as bringing people in who--obviously some people would evolve from their initial roles into modifications of those or other roles. But generally, you're hiring the best guy you could find to be a speech writer, with the thought [that] he wasn't going to advance from that to

anywhere else. He was going to be a speech writer, the best you could get, and that for four years or eight years, and then he was going to go out and write his book and cash in. But--and the same with the domestic policy man, or, you know, foreign policy, or any other role within the White House structure or the Cabinet structure or the agency structure. You weren't developing people with growth opportunities, which was totally different from what I'd done at J. Walter Thompson Co., where I was bringing young men in and trying to bring them along.

Now, in the White House, I brought young men in because I'd also developed another theory, outside, which is that, dollar for dollar, you get a lot more mileage out of a really bright young guy who is overqualified for the job, but because he's too young he can't go farther, than you do with an older man who is experienced for the job but doesn't have the zeal and has a higher earning capacity. He's worked himself up to a higher earning capacity. And in staffing we had to work with grades and levels, and we couldn't bring in the kinds of people at senior levels that I would've liked. We could bring in hordes of them at junior levels because you didn't have to pay them anything, relatively. And you got enormous amounts of energy, enormous amounts of intelligence, but, as my lawyer told me when we were into the Watergate hearings and those guys were being paraded out at [Senator Samuel J.] Ervin's hearings, you know--the Dwight Chapins, the Larry Higbys, and the Steve Bulls, the Bruce Kehrlis, and all these people--and I said to John Wilson at one point when we were watching the hearings, you know, prior to my

going on, I said, "You know, you've got to admit, John"--this is a seventy-three year old lawyer who's been around the track a number of times. I said, "You've got to admit, John, these people, these kids that are coming on here really handle themselves well. They're really good, aren't they?" He said, "Yeah, they're really good. They've got incredible intelligence and ability. But," he said, "what you never realized, and why you're here today, is that not one of those--there is not one ounce of wisdom in that whole bunch." He said, "There's unlimited intelligence, energy, capability, but no wisdom." And that was an interesting point, and I realize now that [it] is true. And that in using young people that way, which is great for them and great for you, you've got to remember that there's no--you've got to consciously be aware that there's no wisdom and that the wisdom's got to be applied externally. In other words, they've got to be controlled, totally. And I thought they were. We set--that's one of the reasons we set up those rigid systems--the White House staff system, the secretariat, and all that. And it's one of the reasons that I was as rough on people as I was--was that I felt they had to be totally controlled, and I thought they were.

Obviously, as we got into later stages, I got careless in that control mechanism, and I pushed control to other people, who should've had the wisdom as well as the ability--the second level of the White House staff I'm talking about there which were--well, to me, the main mistake in it was [Charles W.] Colson, and I welcomed Colson, because I saw Colson as an opportunity for

someone else to sit and listen to all that BS from the President for hours and hours. And Colson loved it. And I had gotten to the point where it was very hard for me to go through it. I would come out--Larry'll [Higby] tell you--I'd come out of some of those meetings that--I'd learned the patience, but it was being pushed. And I knew there were things I needed to get done that were important, and yet I was having to sit there, and I knew it was important, I knew somebody had to sit there. And I couldn't find anybody else. The President wouldn't latch onto other people. There was Bebe. And there's the great classic remark about Bebe that Richard Nixon really most preferred to be alone, and that's why he spent so much time with Bebe Rebozo [laughter]. Bebe was marvelous, in the sense that Bebe would sit there, and Nixon was alone, but he at least wouldn't appear to be talking to himself [laughter], because there was another body in the room at least. And he'd use Bebe as a sounding board.

FJG: And you would sit and listen to these long discussions on public relations.

HRH: I would? Yeah. Bebe did too, though, didn't he?

FJG: Right.

HRH: I don't know, because Bebe was in all kinds of conversations with the President that I wasn't in on.

FJG: You were describing earlier that the importance of the conversations....

HRH: I had to listen to those, and OK--and those conversations were important because they were a means of working to a conclusion and/or a means of recreation or relaxation that enabled the

President to take time to go through the kinds of stuff that he rambled on and on about, which appears to be unimportant, and yet now, because it's going to be seen in the context of the many hours that were devoted to it, it'll all of a sudden assume a believed importance that I don't believe was--that wasn't really there. It was one thing he turned to to get away from trying to decide whether to commit bombers to Laos, or, you know, dealing with the weighty matters of--that Kissinger--or whether to send troops in to force desegregation in the South or whether to send troops in to deal with the postal strike, you know, [to] militarize the Postal Service. I mean there were--he dealt with those, but you need to step back from those things and let them stew for a while.

And I had seen in the earlier campaign stuff that he had to stew over decisions. When he was going to write a speech--which I started to get to when talking about the campaign thing, looking for an anecdotal comparison--I found that, after he got all this process going--it was a thing that I likened to a dog who tries to, who is getting ready to lie down. At least my dogs--hound dogs specifically do this--they circle. The dog goes round and round and round. You think, "What the hell is he doing?" you know. He's trying to decide how he's going to settle, apparently. It's a process a dog has to go through, and he makes these circles and circles. Now finally, somehow, just the right thing develops, and he settles down and lies down. Nixon had to do that with a speech. He was like the dog circling. He had to go around and do three thousand other things

before he could force himself to do the intense concentration that he ultimately did on a speech, which was remarkable, and it [the circling] would go [on and on]. That was why we set those days off, on Wednesday, to go over to the EOB, and why I knew what he did at night often--he was sitting with those yellow pads--and why there are thousands of pounds of yellow pads somewhere [laughter] that Nixon produced that are a part of his speech writing process. But to get to it, he had to get rid of all these other things. And he'd set up inane meetings, and he'd sit and go through inane conversations, and he'd haul in people that there was no reason to talk to. Here we are about to make a major speech on bombing Cambodia, and we'd set aside three days to get ready for it. And he spends the first day and a half of those three days, or two days of those three days doing what I'd call the circling like the dog [laughter], you know, where he'd call in Pat [Patrick J.] Buchanan on some other totally different matter and go through stuff where he'd have, you know, Mrs. Doran the decorator in to decide whether we'd have to change the rug in the Oval Office, or something. I mean, it was all stuff that was totally irrelevant or--the other big escape hatch was this absorption with the technical aspects of PR [public relations] and of the social stuff. You also will find enormous absorption in, you know, what kind of wine do we serve tonight? Or should, you know, the waiters wear white jackets or black jackets?

FJG: The arrangement of the tables.

HRH: The arrangement of the tables--well, that--there was reason for that. He hated state dinners because, he said, they've got this

barbaric custom [Haldeman laughter] where you have to alternate male and female. He said, "That means I always have to be surrounded by two females. And," he said, "I don't know if you've noticed--and it's not an infallible rule, but it's a substantial rule--that the wives of great men are usually very insignificant people [laughter], and certainly dull people to talk to [laughter], in most cases." There obviously are exceptions. But he said, "Unfortunately, at a state dinner, protocol demands that the wife of the guest of honor sit on my right and that my wife sit on my left. I don't have a lot to talk with my wife about at a dinner, and I find I don't have anything to talk about [laughter] to the guest's wife with, and," he said, "I hate it, and it's a terrible custom, and there ought to be a way to get out from under it." But the point was there that, you know, he was absorbed with seating. And I found a thing in my notes where I saw him working on seating and he said, "Have Mrs. [John B.] Connally sit on my right," because Nellie Connally was someone he enjoyed talking with. Anne Armstrong--it wasn't all women, and it wasn't all wives of famous people. Imelda Marcos was interesting to talk to in her own way, more interesting than the President. But....

FJG: You mean President [Ferdinand] Marcos.

HRH: Yeah. But Madame [Charles] de Gaulle was not, and Madame Zhou [Enlai] was not, although she was a character in her own right, but she wasn't--she didn't have the Zhou Enlai appeal. Interesting, in my uncommon man thing, I found some others, and Zhou Enlai is the top among them. He enchanted me and he

enchanted Nixon. He was an incredible man, and de Gaulle was another--that were clearly in that uncommon man category.

But going back to the PR thing. The PR was--Nixon did not take time very often. He'd go through it, and he'd try to force himself. You could see conversations about that--"that I should play golf in the afternoons. Lyndon Johnson said I should take naps in the afternoons and have a massage." And Eisenhower said I should play golf in the afternoons." And, "Other people would say I should do this and do that." He tried all those things; he didn't like them. It didn't work. It bothered him to be out playing golf, because he wasn't getting anything done. I feel that an awful lot of that PR stuff was an alternative to playing golf. It was recreation that he enjoyed, in that he could wallow around in something. And you'll find in his conversations with Bebe, I know--he got to wallowing around in less meritorious subjects than PR. And all of that--like Eisenhower read western novels--I think, yeah, it was Eisenhower.

FJG: Yeah.

HRH: OK, that's therapy for the guy. You can say, "Isn't that awful, that the President of the United States is wasting his time reading western novels?" It isn't at all. You can only--any individual can only focus on the weightiest matters for certain lengths of time. It's important for him to get away from those matters, and you need a diversion to do it. The diversions vary. For some people, it's exercise; for some people, it's sex; for some people, it's reading western novels; for some people, it's sleeping; for some people, it's--whatever. For Nixon, a lot of

it was--and I don't think he ever realized this himself--it was sitting talking about things that don't matter very much, but at least sitting with somebody that you could trust and vent your spleen about people, or ponder the whole public relations thing.

And that's not to say that he had no substantive or non-recreational concern with PR, because he definitely did. But there again, I think he's been misjudged grossly because of it, in the sense that it [the misjudgement] says it was his ego and he wanted, you know, to be built up and wanted to be loved, and all that kind of thing. I don't think that was true at all. Or, if it was, it was very minimal, as contrasted with some of the other people that I've looked at in the same context. With him, the PR concern was a very valid, to me, substantive concern that he had a problem, which he recognized, in communication and gaining understanding of the populace, that had to be dealt with, and he had to find ways to deal with it in order to govern properly. And as a consummate politician, he recognized that the President cannot govern by order, by fiat, by command. He is not a dictator. He can only ultimately govern by his influence on public opinion. Because the only way he could get Congress to go along with his things is if Congress perceives that what he wants is what the people want. He can only get himself re-elected, which is one essential in the first term that a President always is going to look at, if a majority of the people are going to vote for him. So his standing in the polls isn't a thing of--and I think this was true, in a different degree, of Lyndon Johnson. They used to ridicule Johnson because he always had the latest

poll in his pocket, you know, and pull it out and discuss it with everybody. And they'd think, you know, he was consumed with concern with the polls. Nixon was not consumed in that sense the way Johnson was, but he was concerned, validly, and I think Johnson's concern was at least partially valid, in that he knew he couldn't govern if he didn't have a certain standing in the polls. When a President gets down to a 30% public approval rating, he's got a helluva time getting anything through Congress, getting anything agreed upon in the general field of public opinion--of taking any bold step, because you've got to mobilize backing for a bold step. And you've got to discover-- Nixon knew he had to discover, unlike [John F.] Kennedy, to whom Nixon felt--and I think he's right--that it came naturally. Kennedy's instinct was good. Eisenhower's, in a totally different way, also was. But the reason, if you read some of the Eisenhower books--the reason Eisenhower was selected as supreme commander was not because he had great military strategic ability, it was because he had great persuasive ability, because he was a consummate politician. He could get people to follow him. And Nixon knew that he didn't have that inherently, and that he had to develop it consciously and work on it constantly and hone it and build it in order to be able to govern properly.

And that's why we went through all the discussions, which-- a lot of them were valid; a lot of them were not. A lot of them were--but the invalid ones were the trailing off into the therapy thing, or the recreational thing. The valid ones were the kinds of things where we evolved going over the heads of the press to

the nation by using television. And for a long time we did a helluva job of using--as Reagan did last night--all three networks, which means you force the attention of the vast majority of the American people, because the vast majority--God knows why--turn on their television sets regardless of what's on them. And they select from what's on one of the three networks. And if you're on all three networks, they've got no selection to make but you. And we reached enormous audiences. And we timed our things--we went [on the air] at nine o'clock at night. Reagan went at eight. That's a mistake, because that's five o'clock in the West, and in the summertime, especially, at five o'clock in the West ain't nobody home watching TV. We went at nine, because by six--nine was as late as you could go and still catch people before they went to bed in the East, and it was as early as you could go and hopefully get some people at least at home and at their TV sets in the West. We played with ten [o'clock]; we played with nine-thirty; we juggled times around. I read polls; I read ratings. I mean, we scientifically worked at it, if you want to call it scientific--pseudoscientific--to figure out when do we get the biggest audiences, when do we force the biggest audience. Well, the networks finally wised up to us. It took them a long time, which is incredibly stupid on the part of the network management, and [they] decided, [point number] one, they'll pool, you know, and one network will carry this speech, and the next--another network will carry the other. So, the vast majority of the people who don't want to watch a presidential speech will have the soap operas or whatever,

basketball games to watch instead. There was great validity to his having an important interest in all these aspects of PR. But there's also an explanation, in my view--I'm summing up now, in a sense--there's an explanation, in my view, that the interest went beyond the valid area, and that was, to a great degree, recreational, therapeutic, whatever you want to call it. It was wheel spinning, dog circling.

RHG: Were you able to say to yourself while this was going on--the therapeutic type thing--"Oh, there's some more of that canine circling going on again, and a good decision is going to come out of it in the end?"

HRH: Yes. That's what I guess enabled me to maintain my sanity through some of those things, but it even then got to the point where, you know, it just was a helluva price to pay for me, because the burden on me was getting bigger, or at least I was feeling it was, and that there were more things I had to do, and there were more problems that needed my attention, that I needed time with. And yet I had always taken the view, from the day one, that I was always primarily available to the President. I never set up an independent schedule of my own, except internal staff meetings, which were always cancellable or overrideable and were cancelled and/or overridden--as were any outside meetings that I had, but I didn't have very many--by the President's buzzer. The outside meetings [that] I had, I had in my office. The President's buzzer was on my phone, and if it rang, I excused myself and went into the Oval Office. And sometimes he would--sometimes if I were doing something he had told me to do, and it

was obvious that he had called me in just because he was lonely, I'd say, you know, "I'm meeting with Arthur Burns to tell him he can't have the Fed [Federal Reserve Board] job," and, you know, "Do you want me to cancel that?" or something. And he'd say, "No, no, go on back and come in when you're finished", or something like that. But if it were an unimportant, a relatively unimportant meeting I was in outside, if he called me in I went in and I'd stay there. And I sat through all that stuff.

But then, as I started to say earlier, I--when Colson came along, the President obviously enjoyed talking with Colson, as he did with Bebe, but he could talk with Colson on political stuff. And what I realized really too little too late--my famous TL2 formula--was that one of the reasons he liked talking with Colson is he had confidence that, no matter what outrageous thing he told Colson to do, Colson would go out and do it. And that I viewed as one of my key roles--was not to do a lot of the things that he told me to do, but, in the process of not doing it, avoid letting him get to a point where he didn't have confidence in me that I would get done what he wanted done. Because then he wouldn't deal with me anymore. And people can say, you know, "Why didn't you quit?" or "Why didn't you refuse to do things? Why didn't you tell him, 'That's outrageous'?" My answer to that is, had I done so I would have been out and someone else would have been in, and in my egotistical sense, the someone else who would've been in would not have been as good as I would have been in not doing the things that shouldn't be done.

RHG: You mentioned that Rose Mary Woods was the only one who was able

to stay with Nixon over a very long period of time. What did she learn? What was it that she did that permitted that?

HRH: Well, Rose learned how to deal with him in I guess some of the same ways I did, but at a totally different level. Also, she devoted her life to him, which most people aren't willing to do. I made up my mind I would devote my life to him for the time I was there. In no way was I willing to do it forever. Rose and Loie Gaunt, who worked with Rose and in other ways, really did devote their lives to him and sublimated everything else to their service to Richard Nixon. And I think he recognized that that was an enormously valuable asset, yet you'll see that there were a lot of times of dissatisfaction with Rose at the White House, both on Rose's part and on the President's part. And I've been blamed by some of the journalists, you know--that I started feuds with Rose and kicked her out, and all that. Those of you who have [heard] the tapes know that, along with everything else that I did, I was doing [it] at the President's orders.

That's the reason, in a sense, from my personal selfish viewpoint, I welcome the tapes coming out, because--well it's not important to me at all. It doesn't--because I know what I did internally and why I did it in every case, every act that I took. [In] some of them I made mistakes, admittedly, but I know why. Other people choose to view them as my decisions that were serious errors. I can--I think I could probably go back day by day, tape by tape, decision item by decision item, and prove every mistake I made, as well as every good move that I made, was the result of a direct order, or of a clearly understood

requirement arising from a series of previous direct orders. And I'm totally satisfied as to that. I have no question in my mind that I took any action in contravention of the President's express or implicit desires, or that I did anything that wasn't what he wanted done. There's a lot of things he wanted done that I didn't do, and ultimately I made it known to him that I hadn't done them, in almost every case, where it mattered. There were some that he knew I wasn't going to do anyway.

[END OF REEL 3]

[BEGIN REEL 4]

RHG: Oh, I was going to ask--what was the last thing you said? It was about....

HRH: See now, the prosecutor would jump at me and say, "You mean you can't recall what happened seventeen years ago," and you can't even remember what happened seventeen seconds ago! [Laughter]

FJG: We were talking about Rose Woods.

RHG: Rose Woods--and let's see now--and then we started talking about....

FJG: And Mr. Haldeman said he did what he did with....

HRH: Yeah, I was going into a long thing on how I--orders I didn't carry out and orders that I did, and you started to say something. It was--and I think the last thing I said was something about the orders I didn't carry out.

RHG: Right. This--oh yes, that's what it was. I was going to say, the orders you didn't carry out were presumably--fell in a few categories, all of them undesirable in the sense that you didn't want to do them. Did they arise at particular times, [in]

particular circumstances? Was it a frame of mind Nixon would get in? What sort of things would lead to orders you didn't want to carry out?

HRH: All kinds of things. I can't really classify them, I don't think, because they could arise at important, high-level things, at totally insignificant, low-level things. It tended, I think, to be more in the low-level, petty type stuff--the things where he's lashing out in anger. Which is--again, I had learned way back--you were asking about things I learned in dealing with him--that one of the things he used staff for was to vent anger that he couldn't vent on other people. A politician has to be nice to everybody, presumably. And working with him in campaigns I found that I often spent a lot of time between stops, either on the airplane or in a hotel room or at night after the end of a campaign day or something, being lashed about the head and shoulders about all the stuff that everybody had done wrong, and all the, you know--this and that. And what I realized that was--and I think Rose Woods, you asked what Rose had learned, that's one of the things she had learned. Because Rose had told me, when I was a young guy first starting with him and all--and I think I was really crushed because he had jumped on me on something I had done on an advance, and I was talking to Rose about it and saying, well, you know, "What should I have done?" And she said, "The greatest compliment that he can pay to you is to lash at you like that, because that is the evidence that he trusts you, respects you, and puts you in a category where he can afford the luxury of dumping on you. Because [with] most people

he's got to smile and say, 'Oh, don't worry about it. That's perfectly all right.'" Which is what he does with most staff. And Paul Matulic was telling me yesterday that, in working with him now in writing the book [1999], that he'll come in and say, "How're you coming on the draft of chapter three?" or something, you know, and Paul will say, "Well, I'm not quite done yet." And Nixon will smile and say, "That's OK; take your time." You know, and he says that he's really very nice to work with. Well, I didn't say anything to Paul, but, you know, if it had been me, and he'd come in and said, "What're you doing with the draft?" and I'd say, "Not done yet", he'd say, "Well, God damn it, get off your ass and get it done! What the hell else are you here for?" He would! And that--I took that to heart, what Rose had said on that, and I think it was true.

Again, it's the therapy thing. When you're under--see, he had to control himself. He was--and that was what damaged some of his public image--he was not naturally cheerful, pleasant and all, the way Ronald Reagan is. Ronald Reagan is, when he comes on and says, "Golly, gee whiz," that's pure Ronald Reagan. He hasn't studied that; that's just him. That's the way he is. And he's nice and pleasant to everybody. He also gets very mad, but he gets mad in front of people, too. Nixon didn't, except when he felt he should. He controlled getting mad in front of people. There were times when he did, but it was conscious, it was programmed. And all of his public appearance basically was programmed. I mean, what he did was thought through, because he realized that it needed to be. The reverse side of that was that

he needed the luxury of having time when he didn't have to think things through. And that was going through some of these things [the "circling"] and also with issuing orders. I mean, it was venting spleen. He'd say, "I want every single member of the State Department, from top to bottom, put through a lie detector. I don't care who they are or where they are in the world. Every single one of them." Well, you know, that's clearly an absurd request; there's no way you can do that. And he knew it and I knew it, and that was one you didn't have to worry about. I used that as an example in that San Diego seminar, because, you know, it's absurd. But he was serious on some of them, and there were things where he'd say, you know, "Fire Ambassador So-and-so, and I want it done immediately. I want it on my desk at seven o'clock tomorrow morning [that] he's gone." Well, you'd delay on that, run the risk of the wrath, because he may be serious and he may be right, but those are the kinds of things you can't pull back if you do them. So you delay doing them to be sure that he's both serious and right. And if he's wrong, you try to argue out of it until you get to the point where he makes the decision it's to be done. Then you do it.

And that's the point where people say, "When you got to that point, when he'd ordered you to do something and you'd tried not to and you knew it was wrong, and then he said, 'You're overruled--do it', why didn't you quit or refuse to do it, regardless?" And my point there was, lose little battles and win big wars, that, you know, if this isn't going to do any long-range permanent damage, then it's better to do it, even though

it's the wrong thing to do, than it would be to lose his confidence that he knows he can rely on me. Because that was my whole stock in trade--he did totally rely on me. And there weren't very many people that he did.

RHG: Did you recognize right away that Colson was someone who would do everything Nixon asked?

HRH: No. I don't think I did--I don't know; maybe I did. That may not be a fair answer. I may have let myself be lured into the luxury of, you know, despite knowing that, letting him be the guy, figuring that I could stop things. And I usually did. I had left it with Colson--I think the tape[s]--well, no, they don't. I wasn't taped. My arrangement with Colson, once I let the leash out more and Colson spent more time with the President, was an absolute order to him from me that he do nothing that the President ordered him to do except with my knowledge and/or through the staff system. Now, some things had to be done outside the staff system, and that was understood. But, he was not to do anything outside the staff system that he and I hadn't reviewed first. He jumped over those traces from time to time, and I'd call him up short. And there was a long session I think he wrote about, where he--I did [call him up short] on something, and he ended up crying in my office. Which he did--he broke down and cried, because I just tore him apart mercilessly, because he had done something that did matter, that he should not have done, and that, you know, I would've stopped if I'd known, but I didn't know it. He in effect end ran me, and I really worked him over on it, and he ended up crying. And that was the thing where he

sent me the next day--now how the hell was it--he sent me a bag with two walnuts in it, and he says, "You got 'em" [laughter]-- and also sent me a pair of white buck shoes, because I had kidded him about being a Harvard boy, or something, and wearing white buck shoes. And I said, "As a matter of fact, you know, you can't buy them any more," and he said, "Oh yes you can, at the Harvard student store," or something, and he had called the Harvard student store and had them send down a pair of white buck shoes for me [laughter], and he gave me [them]. Colson was a strange guy. I think I'm revising my initial response to your question and saying that yeah, I did realize it. I probably would [say this]. And I--but I thought I had taken proper safeguards to deal with it, in the sense of forcing him to come to me, with stuff. But I think that he got to the point, and the tapes would probably reveal this--I think it got to the point where the President probably said to him, which he would say to me about things from time to time, "I want this done. You are not to tell Haldeman. You're to go ahead and do it, and don't get Bob involved." You know, he'd say, "Bob's too boy scoutish for this stuff," or something. "You and I are big boys who know how to handle these things." I don't know that that's happened, but I would suspect--I wouldn't be surprised to find something like that on the tapes. Because I know Nixon's--part of his modus operandi was playing people off with each other also. Not to the degree that FDR [Franklin Roosevelt] did, but he had--he was intrigued with FDR's technique in that regard, and he played that game himself, not nearly as skillfully as FDR did certainly.

RHG: Did you try to--continually--to stop that end running that Colson would do? Was this something that....

HRH: I don't think he did it continually. Maybe I'm wrong. I just think that once in a while an incident would pop up where it turned out that he had done something. And that's--it was one of tho[se]--the fact that I recall vividly that one would indicate it was not common. And I don't think it was. I think Colson tried to do, to work, you know, the way he was supposed to work and understood the reason for it and the merit in doing it. I think that either he--I would not be surprised if he had had direct orders from the President to end run me, and that he is the type, as a Marine officer, you know, if he's ordered to end run Haldeman by the Commander-in-Chief, he will end run Haldeman, despite Haldeman's orders as chief of staff not to end run him.

And--because I'm sure Nixon got frustrated at times with my diverting or subverting or reverting some of the things that he wanted done and sought to work his way around me. And we set up knowingly ways to do that. The theory is that I controlled total access to the President. The fact, of course, is that I didn't at all. There was nothing to stop any number of people from walking into the Oval Office, except their own good judgement in recognizing the staff system and that they were better off, and it was a better run snip, if they would come to me, or the appointments guy who worked for me--Chapin, or whoever it was at the time--and schedule and request time, schedule themselves in. But it often happened that they didn't do that. Usually when they didn't, they'd come by and tell me, you know. Plus, I

wasn't with the President every second. He was in public functions, and he'd talk to staff people at public functions, he'd talk to outside people, and that was the horrendous thing, that was where I really got end run, was the President doing it, not maliciously, but just you know--a Congressman comes up to him at a reception and says, you know, "You've got to sign this bill, or meet with this girl that's coming in next week, or something" The President says, "Sure, be glad to do it," and he'd never bother to tell me about it. Then we'd be stuck with a scheduled fact we couldn't do anything about. Then I'd get chewed out for letting the Congressman bring this girl in, which of course the President had set up himself. But that's inevitable. That's part of--you learn that that's part of the system that you deal with, and part of the process of dealing with this man, the way he works.

And I think every chief of staff has got to learn the same kinds of thing that I did about their President, and it's going to be different. That's why I say at those seminars, "You can't"--to these academicians who want to write a text book, you know, on the operating manual for being chief of staff of the White House. There is no such thing. In the first place, there is no such thing as chief of staff. There never was one before me. Sherman Adams was not chief of staff, he was the Assistant to the President, and he did not run the operation the way I did at all. He had nothing to do with foreign policy, and he totally dictated domestic policy planning. I had nothing to do with dictating either foreign policy or domestic planning, but I had

everything to do with the process of both.

RHG: Quite a few of the memoirs that I've looked at, including your book, frankly, and Ehrlichman's, Kissinger's, seem to emphasize some of the negative qualities of Nixon's personality. Your book mentions that he could get muddled on a glass of wine, [that he was] a man who looks somewhat short-tempered, irritable. I keep seeing these qualities, which are not entirely attractive, and yet clearly you were devoted to Nixon, willing, as you say, to give a good part of your life to him. And you found something in him that was very inspirational. How did you--how did these things appear to you when you first started realizing them, that they were there?

HRH: Well, realistically, I understood that he was a human being, that he had flaws as well as good points, and that, in the role that I, by White House time, had cast myself in or been cast in--I had to deal with emphasizing his good points and de-emphasizing his bad ones. And I recognized, as smart people do when they enter into a marriage, that you marry the person you're marrying for the person that she is, not for the person that you're going to make her into being, if you're smart. And I did that with Nixon. I went into the relationship with the recognition there were things about it I didn't like and things about it that I didn't respect even, in some cases--but that my job was to deal with those, just as I dealt with all the things I did like and did respect, and try to minimize the bad and maximize the good.

I do want to make a point regarding the books, though, that you've noticed in the books--Kissinger's, Ehrlichman's, and

mine--emphasis you might say on bad points. In my case, and I would suspect it's true of Henry and John also, the reason those are there, in my case--because that's not my nature to talk about the bad things, and I never did when I was in the White House, and I didn't intend to when I got out--was the demand literally by the publisher and my co-author that you have to cover those too in order to have any credibility, that you cannot continue to maintain the myth that this guy is absolutely perfect. You've got to face the fact, because the world knows that he is not. In this case because the shade already has been lifted--they've heard him.

I went through a long session with Billy Graham after the tapes were released. Billy was out in Los Angeles and called and wanted to get together, and I went over to the hotel and spent a whole afternoon. He was absolutely crushed. And he said, "Bob, I can't believe what I've read in the tapes, because," he said, "in all the hours I spent with Richard Nixon, and there were many, many hours, he never said 'damn,' let alone all those things--the kinds of things I hear him saying on the tapes." And he said, "I can't believe it, and I'm hoping that you will tell me that there's something wrong with the tapes, which I can't believe is the case. But how can you explain this?" I told him--Richard Nixon had enormous respect for Billy Graham, and enormous affection for him. And he recognized him as a man of the church, and there wasn't any way he was going to say, "damn" or "shit" or "fuck" in front of Richard Nixon--I mean in front of Billy Graham. On the other hand, when he was letting off steam,

dealing with us, talking about things, he used locker room language. And I said to Billy Granam, "I have to confirm to you that that was not untypical, it wasn't just Watergate. If you hear the tapes of the early years, you'll hear the same stuff in the early years. It might have been worse under the pressure of Watergate at times, but it was always there. And it was there before he became President, and I'm sure it's there now." And I'm sure it is, because that's the way he talks. And I said, "I hate to tell you this, Billy, but I think that you would find, if any of your other friends, other than men of the cloth--and probably a lot of the men of the cloth too--if they had been taped in all of their conversations, at all times in all places, that they'd be using some of that language too. And maybe a lot more than you'd be able to believe of them, either." That helped him. I mean, you know, he said, "I suppose that's true." I said, "Everybody--we all--I use bad language when I talk to people who're using bad language, but I don't use it when I'm talking to people who don't. I never have said any word like that in front of my kids or my wife. But, you know, [with] my business associates and personal friends, and things like that, I do. I'm not proud of that fact, and I'm not saying it to you to brag. I'm saying it to you because it might help you to understand that you, given the eminence that you have as a man of the cloth, are going to be treated differently by people than other people." And he sort of understood that.

That got me way off the track. Where was I?

FJG: I think you were going to talk about some of Nixon's positive

points.

RHG: Well, just thinking back to the early days....

HRH: OK, we were talking about--the subject was the negative thing, the emphasis on the negative. What I wanted to say was, in writing a book, you're forced to put--I found I was forced to put that kind of stuff in. I would've never put it in a book that I had decided to write, but I was persuaded by logic--well, first of all, I was told, "You can't write the book without it, and we won't publish the book without it." Secondly, I was told, "It doesn't matter, because the world already knows all these bad things anyway, so all you're doing is maintaining your credibility by affirming what everybody already knows. You're not revealing new bad things necessarily, and we don't want you to." But that, of course, they did want me to, and they kept pushing. Every instant, they would try to turn to the negative. Because they knew, instinctively--their motivation was to sell books. They knew that the way you sell books is by putting in bad things. The more sensationally bad they are, the more books you'll sell. And I would suspect that Ehrlichman and Kissinger were under the same kinds of pressure from their publishers. They were--I don't think either of them would be particularly inclined to put in all the bad stuff. I tried to mitigate the bad stuff. I tried to go through my quartz crystal thing that some lady had described to me in a letter, that I found very compelling--that he [Nixon], like everybody, is a human being. He does have bad qualities. You do too, and so do I. And I think you've got to learn to accept those qualities, and your

level of regard for any individual is your assessment of the balance of the good versus the bad.

RHG: Just to think back, I was trying to think back to the time when you were finding, were feeling in yourself the inspirational quality of Nixon and deciding to give yourself [for] some period. Thinking back to that time or those times, what was it you were seeing in him that made you feel that way?

HRH: Well, the incredible grasp of the whole range of the political issue--political in its finest sense--of the important issues facing the country and how to deal with them. I just--I still am mind-boggled by the grasp that the man has and his ability to see all of these things in their relative context, the relationships with each other. He's got--the foreign policy thing everybody seems to be pretty willing to accept. The same thing is true, I think in almost the same degree, in domestic policy.

But take foreign policy, where it's believable. He has a grasp of the geopolitical context of all the problems. Now, he has much greater interest in some issues than in others, partly because to him they're much more important. Now that isn't fashionable to say that, but Third World stuff isn't of enormous interest to him because it isn't of enormous importance, I don't think, to him. Latin America likewise. We never got to Africa or Latin America during all the travels that we did, all the dozens of countries that we visited. Why? They weren't important in his mind. Now, Latin America, or at least Central America, is more important in some sense strategically now. I suspect that, if we were here today, we might be--have visited

Nicaragua or Guatemala, or been through some of the area down there. We went to the places and did the things that he thought were important. And he saw their importance not just in terms of individual issues standing alone, but in their interrelationship to other issues. And he saw the whole relations with the Soviet bloc, relations with China, relations with the Soviet--with the communist complex as vitally important. And he saw himself as uniquely able to deal with them, because he felt, and I agreed with him, that he had a clear understanding of the communist threat, the reality of the communist threat, and of the necessity and opportunity for dealing with it. And all those things intrigued the hell out of him. I mean, the guy, he just--he could stand there--watching that first convention, when I went to San Francisco, and he'd stand there and talk with delegates. Any question that they asked, anybody asked him, he could answer in excruciating detail and with brilliant--what appeared to me as a, you know, junior advertising man at the time--just brilliant insight. And I'd never come across anybody like that before, and I've got to say I've never come across anybody since. And I've been exposed to most of the great people of the world in our time.

FJG: Did you find that he had a coherent political philosophy?

HRH: Yes.

FJG: He's been accused of being a trimmer and opportunist in many cases.

HRH: I think he had very, very much of an inner line to follow, but also a clear recognition that he who follows a straight line goes

straight downhill or something [laughter]. There must be a Chinese proverb to cover it. A recognition that, to get from here to there, a straight line is the shortest distance, but it's not an achievable, politically achievable, distance, that you have to trim and tack, just as, when you're sailing on a beat, you can't--when you're sailing on a run, you can go from A to B. When you're sailing on a beat, you've got to go from A to A1 to A2 to A3 to A4 to A5 to A6 before you get to B. And I think he recognized that--that you had to tack in order to get to where you were going. I think he always knew where he was going. Also, the situation changes. Staying with the sailing analogy, in a normal race buoy A is here and buoy B is here, and you've got to tack to get to B. But in the race that he was running, once you left A and started tacking, somebody'd come out and move B over to here. When he moved B over to here, maybe you'd shift from a beat to a reach, and you can do it in a different way. And he was clearly able to deal with that. In other words, he wasn't locked into a single strategic plan that he stayed with come hell or high water. He was willing to trim and adjust in order to still get from A to B. He was very pragmatic; he was very realistic. And he tried to figure how to get there the fastest, but he recognized that that straight line wasn't necessarily--it may have been the shortest, but not necessarily the fastest.

FJG: Did he ever articulate political philosophy to you, like "Bob, I believe that....?"

HRH: Not in a--not in a pontifical sense like that, no. He, as you've

heard on the tapes, he'd get into explaining political philosophy from time to time, mostly, in my view, if what he was doing was trying something. He was doing that all the time. I saw that in conversations with Congressmen and all that. Everything he was-- when he'd get into talking what he was doing was trying out a speech line or a paper line or policy line. He was trying--he was trying to see what reaction would be to something, or to see how it sounded to him. He had to say it in order to see whether it came through right, whether it was articulating what he wanted it to articulate properly. And a lot of this was practice, and I could see that. I could see--I think I noted some of them in my diaries, where I'd see three days later a conversation that I remembered having had three days ago, that I thought he was explaining something to me, and it turned out that what he was-- he was rehearsing a speech line or a press conference answer line or a statement that he was going to make to some group, or something. I don't think--I think that the closest to a statement, an overall statement of his philosophy probably will be in this next book, which I think he thinks of as his last, his final book. But he seems to be--I haven't read any of it, but he seems to be very excited about it as a statement of where the world will be and should be and could be in 1999, or the turn of the century, or whatever.

FJG: You mentioned you would hear things days later after you had discussed [them] with him in a different context. Did you ever notice that that would happen after he met with other people, that somebody--and I'm thinking particularly of John Connally--

would talk to him about something, and days later you would hear John Connally's words coming out of Richard Nixon's mouth?

HRH: Absolutely. He soaks stuff up like a sponge, and especially when people he respected--and he enormously respected John Connally. I think he saw in John Connally a peer in more directions than he saw in anybody else. I think he saw him as--and also a superior in some directions. He saw Connally as more attractive and having more the Kennedy-type appeal than he, Nixon, could ever have and the instincts for the big play and all that. But he also saw the same kind of level of political astuteness and insight that he felt he had in himself. I think he, to some degree, overrated Connally in that regard, in that I don't think Connally was as deeply insightful as Nixon was. I think Connally's insight was more super[ificial]--surface level. I think Nixon's went very deep. I think he holds very deep convictions, and he is constantly learning.

And he soaks stuff up from--he's had exposure to just an incredible, when you think about it--the range of world leaders and domestic leaders, that his career, his time in the public posture spans, covers just an incredible bunch of people. And I think he learned a lot from all of them. He learned--I know that he spent a lot of time with Herbert Hoover. He loved to go up, and I went up with him several times, to the Waldorf to sit at Hoover's knee, in effect, and listen to him. And I think he learned a lot from Whittaker Chambers. I'm not exactly sure what! [Laughter] I think he thinks he learned a lot from Whittaker Chambers, maybe about the nature of communist tactics,

and stuff like that, but I think it went deeper than that. And hundreds of others, all along the way.

But, you're right, absolutely. You would hear things that someone would say come back out, and you'd hear--he'd--not even three days later he'd have a meeting with Connally, and then you'd hear in his next meeting with Arthur Burns, you'd hear him say as his view something that was exactly coming out from what Connally said, to see what Burns's reaction would be. And then he'd go back and play--without crediting him--and then he'd go back and play Burns's thing to Connally, because it was better to have it come as the President's view, you'd get a better reaction. If you told Burns, "This is what Connally thinks," Burns was automatically against it, and vice versa. But, if you told Burns, "This is the President's view," then you got a weighting of whether Burns really was against it or not.

FJG: Did you get any feeling of who might have had the greatest influence on him?

HRH: Boy, that's interesting. I really--that's the area that the journalists keep wanting to get into, is those superlatives--what was your scariest moment, what was your happiest moment, and what was the greatest [thing] that you did and all. I'm not sure--I'm not sure I know or that I have a view as to the greatest--there were lots of influences on him. De Gaulle had an enormous impact on him. Zhou Enlai had an enormous impact on him. [Sir Alexander Douglas-] Home had a substantial impact on him. Going back, way back, Whittaker Chambers did, Eisenhower did. There were a lot of others. By omission, I shouldn't be implying

ranking, because I'm just--they don't jump immediately to mind. In the presidency, I would say the people with whom he dealt that had the most influence were probably Connally and Mitchell. Others, sort of a step removed but highly regarded, were Arthur Burns and Shultz. Billy Graham--very strong and far beyond just religious influence. [Pause] An, I don't know.

RHG: What sort of influence, or knowledge I guess, did Mitchell offer to Nixon?

HRH: Judgement. Not knowledge, particularly, except legal, to some degree legal knowledge. More political judgement, and people-handling judgement, people evaluation, that kind of thing.

RHG: Because, of course, what you see on the surface with Mitchell--the first things you learn about him have to do with Watergate and then with the selection of Carswell and...

FJG: Haynsworth.

RHG: ...Haynsworth.

HRH: Yeah. Ehrlichman's thesis is that Mitchell was responsible for all of the major disasters of the Nixon administration and none of the successes. And superficially, that may be sustainable as a thesis. I think it overlooks substantial contributions that Mitchell made, to me the greatest one being the--being the person that Nixon was willing to let run the political campaign. Now he made a, as it turns out, I guess--well I don't know. I still don't know what happened in Watergate. I don't even have a valid theory at this point.

RHG: We'll try that in another session [laughter].

HRH: But, you know, you can hang Mitchell with Watergate, and you can

hang him with Carswell and Haynsworth and there was another one. Didn't Ehrlichman come up with another one? He has a--Ehrlichman has sort of a litany of them.

FJG: Well, it seems to be fairly clear that there was a conflict between the two over, I guess, certain legal and domestic matters that verged into politics, and Ehrlichman seems to believe that he won in the end, that Mitchell somehow was sloughed off after what he would call the failure of all of Mitchell's Supreme Court nominees to pass muster. I may be putting words in his mouth.

HRH: They didn't all fail to pass muster.

FJG: Well, which ones did he suggest...?

RHG: There were a couple of others, too. There was somebody in, I think, Tennessee and, when the White house went down to look into it, they found out this man had all kinds of problems.

FJG: Herschel Friday, from Arkansas.

HRH: That's right.

FJG: Mildred Lillie.

HRH: Mildred Lillie.

RHG: With the husband problems?

FJG: Yeah, although, as I recall, I think Ehrlichman was incorrect on that. The problem with Mildred Lillie was that the ABA [American Bar Association] wouldn't approve her. They said they would not rate her as qualified, and that was the kiss of death. There were husband problems...

HRH: I think that's right.

FJG: ...there were husband problems, but they weren't serious, as I recall...

an.

.from the discussions. It was just--they threw that in. Speaking of the Supreme Court, this is just an offhand question, do you know if Howard Baker was ever considered?

I think he was. I think the record shows that he was, but I don't think--I think he was considered, but I don't think he got down to the final check list.

Do I have time for a couple more questions?

Yes. We have about ten minutes.

OK. Just thinking back to some earlier things we had talked about, I just want to try to mention a couple of things that are in your experience and see if you can just tell me what surrounding these things informed you about Nixon's strengths and weaknesses in handling his affairs. Not personally. The fifty-state pledge in the 1960 campaign.

Well, the fifty-state pledge was just a dramatic gesture. He loved the historic first. We all kidded about that. He was always doing--playing with this historic first, and that was going to be an historic first. It had to be, because there had never been fifty states before! [Laughter] But I don't think any President had ever campaigned in all the states of the Union at any time, whatever number there were. But it was a grandstand play, at the convention I think, that he made the statement "I will campaign in every state, all fifty states of the Union." And having said it, he simply felt that he had to do it. And I think he felt--I know at the end, when they were going through the--we were in Billings, Montana in a strategy session one

weekend, because we got grounded there, or something. I think that's right. Anyway, there was the big debate: should he go on to Alaska and what--there was one other, I guess, at the end of the campaign--that it made no sense whatsoever to go to politically. But the only reason, at all, for going was the fifty-state pledge. Everybody argued against it: Len Hall and Finch and, I think, Klein. I don't know, Klein may have stayed for it; I'm not sure. Bassett, the schedule guy. And it ended up, Nixon just said, "I said I was going. I'm going. And if it's a political blunder, it's a political blunder, but I'm going."

RHG: Did you sit there and say to yourself, as you said earlier, "This man needs a manager?"

HRH: No, not in that sense. At that point I was the tour manager. My job was to--I thought he was right, as a matter of fact. I thought he should go, but I didn't say so. And my position was not that of chief of staff, not that of advisor in any capacity. I was tour manager. Someone else made the schedule, and it was my job to carry it out. And I was in the meeting because of that, because I was going to have to carry out all the--work out all of his logistics for doing it. And it was my position to say, "Logistically, it's impossible." But it wasn't impossible logistically, so--I don't--I tend to concentrate on my role, rather than trying to magnify into everybody else's, and I think that's what I did in that. I don't think I--that's part of my explanation of some of the Watergate stuff, too. I do what I'm there to do, and I don't worry about what other people are doing

that are not my responsibility, and who clearly have the responsibility. So, I didn't get into the debate at all. I think--I don't think it--I don't think that's what lost the election. With that election you can say anything was the thing that lost it.

RHG: There was quite a long list you could pick.

HRH: When you lose by as little as that, you can come up--any flaw could be called the one that lost the election.

RHG: How did you feel when you saw your candidate going through the debate process with Kennedy?

HRH: Well, I was deeply concerned, but there again, I was not in the-- I was not at a policy level in that campaign, so I had nothing to do with it except watching and making it work. I was concerned because I knew he was in, you know--looked bad physically and was in bad health. He was not in good physical shape and, therefore, not good mental shape, I didn't think. He wasn't ready to do the job in the debates, but that wasn't--again, I didn't express that view to anybody. I may have to other staff people, sit [down] and, you know--but, I would have expressed it just as a personal concern and not argued for cancellation.

FJG: I want to get back to John Connally, because I personally find him one of the most interesting people in the administration, simply because I--he would blow people away in meetings. I remember one meeting that you had with him, it was about presidential scheduling in the 1972 campaign. And he insisted there was a hole in the schedule, and you rather petulantly said there was no hole in the schedule. He just ignored you, and he

told the President, "If I were you, I would do this, and when I get there," and he began speaking as if he were the President of the United States. It was as if an aura came over him--he spoke as the President of the United States, "And that's what I would say," and the aura was gone. He was always a fascinating character to me. Was he in any way--well, was he ever offered another Cabinet position that you know of? As a stepping stone, presumably, to the presidency?

HRH: You mean after Treasury?

FJG: Yes.

HRH: I don't think so. He, he knew--he was the one Nixon would've liked to have had as Vice President. I think the tapes show that, probably. He, by that point--making a change before the second election, but making a change and getting [Spiro T.] Agnew out and getting Connally in was very attractive to him both in terms of the next four years--having Connally there as Vice President--and the follow up to that of having Connally clearly in line and strongly endorsed as the successor President. That was what he wanted to do, and I think that's what he would have done, if things hadn't--that's what--well, that's what he wanted to do in '70, no, in '72, and then, why didn't--I guess it was just the--what? Connally didn't change parties? We talked about bringing Connally in as Vice President in the election. Then, going past the ele[ction]--then we didn't. Agnew came in. Then, when we got to the Agnew problem, there was no question--because that came up before I left, although it wouldn't become public before I left--there was no question then that he wanted to

appoint Connally, when it became clear that Agnew was probably going to have to get out. That Connally--he would've--that was the ideal: now we can accomplish what we couldn't do in the election and make Connally Vice President. Rice through the thing. Then, that got ruled out when the time came because Connally wasn't deemed to be certainly approvable by the Senate. And--or I guess it's both Houses have to approve the Vice President, don't they? I think they do--the appointed Vice President.

RHG: Yeah.

HRH: And the strategy then was to put [Gerald R.] Ford in, because he was clearly confirmable. And then there was a deletable strategy for putting Ford in which was that that was the sure prevention of impeachment, because nobody in Congress would knowingly make Ford President [laughter].

RHG: It's interesting--Connally--or Nixon was picking someone as an heir apparent who, as events suggest, didn't have any political constituency. And you would think a very wise political man would not have done that.

HRH: He was not picking him as heir apparent. He was picking--my view is, I was not there when that took place, I don't think, was I?

FJG: No.

HRH: I had gone, I went before Agnew did.

RHG: Yes.

HRH: I wasn't there. He picked Ford as Vice President not as an heir apparent....

RHG: I'm sorry, I meant Connally.

HRH: Oh.

RHG: Connally had no--Connally was someone who appealed to Nixon very strongly, and Nixon wanted him as the near apparent, seemingly. But the events suggested that Connally had no political constituency. And I would have thought that a very wise....

HRH: Events at the time? Or events subsequently?

RHG: Well, he ran in 1980, and nothing happened.

HRH: Well, but that was totally, that was after Watergate and after the milk deal and after all the things. I mean, there were a lot of reasons. No, I think--I would agree with--I totally did agree--I was a strong advocate of Connally as the appointed--I was a strong advocate for putting him on the ticket as Vice President. I was instrumental in getting Connally appointed Secretary of the Treasury, and that's one where--[in] personnel stuff I did push my own views, based on analysis and all. And that was one that I pushed hard. And I believed that it was a good move, and I still do. And I think he would--I think, had Connally been Vice President on the ticket and had we handled Watergate right and had Nixon served the second term out, that Connally would've made a helluva good President, and would have been a good candidate for President. As a Democrat turned Republican, as a man with experience in the legislative and the executive and federal--both state and federal, and, you know--he was a guy with a lot of good background, plus all the appeal and all that. And he and Nixon thought on the same track, basically. Connally would push a little harder in some areas than Nixon and less in others, but no real divergence.

FJG: Why don't we just stop right there?

RHG: OK.