

TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDING OF A MEETING BETWEEN
THE PRESIDENT AND H.R. HALDEMAN: ON APRIL
14, 1973, FROM 1:55 TO 2:13 P.M.



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PRESIDENT: Garden tour?

HALDEMAN: (Unintelligible)

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible)

PRESIDENT: Did you? that's alright I'll call him up.

HALDEMAN: Here's the way it stands. I, I saw
Magruder. Mitchell's up there now talking
it out.

PRESIDENT: He got a new (unintelligible).

HALDEMAN: Yeah. Yes, I did.

PRESIDENT: I'll wait. Uh. tell me when I come back.

HALDEMAN: All right.

PRESIDENT: You decided anything?

HALDEMAN: (Unintelligible). (music)

PRESIDENT: He's gone. (Noise) (Pause) (Laugh) Jeez.
According to this paper I may not-it's late.

ZIEGLER: I didn't want him to think, the President to
think that was (unintelligible) at the
Nation.

PRESIDENT: Well, they, they can all throw in the kinds
of things they want, but I'm not gonna even
pay any attention to the (unintelligible). I
think it should be rather light and a kind
of serious note at the end. (unintelligible)
up POW's, peace,

HALDEMAN: That's right.

PRESIDENT: --peace awards isn't it.

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ZIEGLER: Well, you're getting in a --the global
HALDEMAN: ...the global...
ZIEGLER: Peace.
HALDEMAN: global - for world peace.
ZIEGLER: for world peace which is - Beautiful.
HALDEMAN: But it's for world peace.
ZIEGLER: ...for world peace...
HALDEMAN: (Unintelligible) description is, nothing I
care about more than peace.
HALDEMAN: There's nobody in the world who cares more
about peace than I do.
PRESIDENT: Ron, check one thing for me and tell me when
I get there as to whether they will have a
moment of silence for Truman.
HALDEMAN: Johnson.
PRESIDENT: Johnson.
ZIEGLER: OK. Thank you.
PRESIDENT: Huh?
ZIEGLER: I know they won't have (unintelligible).
PRESIDENT: Fine. OK.
ZIEGLER: (Unintelligible). But I.
PRESIDENT: Just be sure--(unintelligible) if they're
not I may have one --then I may not
(unintelligible)
ZIEGLER: Okay (unintelligible)

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PRESIDENT: (unintelligible)

ZIEGLER: I'll let you know, sir--

PRESIDENT: (unintelligible) Don't let it get you down though, Ron.

ZIEGLER: No. sir I won't.

PRESIDENT: That blood pressure's not good, stay strong and so forth.

HALDEMAN: Get rid of that thing because

ZIEGLER: (Unintelligible)

PRESIDENT: (Laughs) I think you do great.

ZIEGLER: No, sir-I understand.

PRESIDENT: Well you chatted and decided not to stay in together.

HALDEMAN: Well, yeah, John remember he said Stans, Stans, Stans--services tomorrow. Why don't you set it up. It may be better if, if it looks like it s a good idea for you to be there just to be available because I may want you to come up fast so I am on standby. Uh stand by--

PRESIDENT: Magruder

HALDEMAN: He has had him in there for forty-five minutes, but he still, he's-still there. Uh, I called Magruder - it took a long time to get him he was not available - uh, and I finally got his office got, excuse me, but his lawyer said he could reach him in about an hour, which he did and had him, had him call me. Well, Jeb said...

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PRESIDENT: I don't want to come in.

HALDEMAN: No. I said, I.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible)

HALDEMAN: Started out by saying now there have been some developments and we reviewed this whole thing with the President and he thought it was important that, that you and your lawyer meet with John Ehrlichman right away and just get up-to-date on where things stand from this side. And uh, he said fine, I can do that, I can't make it 'til about four o'clock. That's the way it's left but he then said Uh, you know this whole thing is, is, uh, he said, I don't know if you know the situation but it's all done now. And uh, I said, what do you mean? And he said well I decided last night, late last night, with my lawyers that I'm gonna, uh go ahead you told me to do what my lawyers told me to do. You said you couldn't advise me. And, and uh--my position--

PRESIDENT: Is that what you told him?

HALDEMAN: Yes sir; You see he called saying, what, what, what does, what does Bob want me to do? And, uh, I told Larry to tell him that I was not in a position to tell him what to do, that, that was, whatever, this was last week, that was a decision he had to make and uh, uh, work out with his own advisers. Uh, at that, you know I wasn't implying any (unintelligible) cutting him off--it was simply that it was his area. Well anyway, uh, uh, he said they had decided last night that he, he would have to tell all and his lawyers met with Silbert today and informed Silbert that Magruder was ready to tell all and uh, requested an opportunity for him to do so. But he

doesn't know what the timing is but the plan is that he will meet first with Silbert and review what he is gonna say and then Silbert will take it to the, then. Silbert will take it to The Grand Jury. Now, they cut a deal. Jeb said first Jeb said I did not ask for immunity because I didn't feel I was entitled to it. He said the reason that I tell everything is because they're gonna get it anyway. They've got witnesses on witnesses now and there's no reason for me to be quiet because they don't, they've got everything anyhow.

PRESIDENT: How does he know that? Silbert's told him?,

HALDEMAN: I guess Silbert's told his lawyers, and uh, this may be, it's a damn good prosecuting lawyer like Silbert

PRESIDENT: Sure

HALDEMAN: ...to get a key witness to tumble, but uh...

PRESIDENT: But immediately?

HALDEMAN: Sure, they've got the facts they may not be able to prove them but they've got them. Magruder's testimony is proof. Uh, but, uh, he, he said the only, he said the only thing I gain out of this is, is the hope that uh, that I don't go up for, uh, all the counts they've got me on. He says they've got me on six or eight counts of perjury, uh, two counts of conspiracy and two counts of uh, uh, obstruction of justice and uh, potentially, and that ends up with uh, sentences of 135 to 160 years in jail. He says I, my lawyers feel that if I open up on this and they've made a, had a discussion they haven't made a

deal apparently, uh, with Silbert as to what they'll do uh, uh as he has been told that the way the process will work is that he'll give his information and they'll determine from the information, what counts they'll seek to indict him on. They'll then take him before the Grand Jury and uh, go for Grand Jury indictments on a limited number of counts and they'll try to work on cooperation and that kind of stuff to lighten his load and uh, he will then plead guilty on all counts. He, he will not stand trial. So he will not testify in public court he will only testify to the Grand Jury and uh, whatever they bring as indictments he'll take guilty pleas on and go to jail.

PRESIDENT: It isn't a fair trail. -

HALDEMAN: He told me that whole thing in a, in an, an unbroken voice and uh, showed more strength than I thought he had, to be perfectly frank. He obviously worked his way through it in his own mind. H's

PRESIDENT: Terrible.

HALDEMAN: ...Awful hard, it certainly is, yeah.

PRESIDENT: Breaks ya up.

HALDEMAN: Don't know what is involved --But its--He understands it and he says the other thing you got to understand, Bob, is that this whole thing is going down the drain he said everybody is gonna crumble. I, this I would suspect these lawyers have talked to each other.

PRESIDENT: Me too.

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HALDEMAN: He said LaRue, everybody involved here is, is gonna to go with the-exception of John--

PRESIDENT: Mitchell.

HALDEMAN: Unfortunately, I had this conversation just as John Mitchell was driving up the driveway I held, had Mitchell go to...

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible)

HALDEMAN: Ehrlichman, but Ehrlichman, then Ehrlichman heard all of this before he went in with Mitchell. Then, he has not, Jeb has not told Mitchell of his decision yet he said, I want to make my decision and then my lawyers were working it out with Silbert this morning and then my next step is to tell John Mitchell which I want to do.

PRESIDENT: How the hell can you keep it from John? What about the White House spot?

HALDEMAN: Jeb says unfortunately "I will to a degree implicate John Dean and to, possibly to some degree, Gordon and I hate to do it", but he said "where I am now there's nothing I, I can't pull any punches."

PRESIDENT: Shit.

HALDEMAN: He said there is no way that anything I do will get to you.

PRESIDENT: John Dean or whoever does it.

HALDEMAN: Well, John Dean (unintelligible) that, that doesn't trouble me I don't think it troubles Dean where he gets John Dean is on his attendance at those meetings.

PRESIDENT: Yeah, that meeting Saturday night?

HALDEMAN: No, the problem there is that, that the discussion at those meetings clearly and specifically did involve bugging.

PRESIDENT: Oh, well Dean never denied that says it's turned off. That's John Dean's stand but what about the aftermath? Does the aftermath...

HALDEMAN: No

PRESIDENT: ...on Dean?

HALDEMAN: I don't think Magruder knows about the aftermath.

PRESIDENT: Where does he get to Gordon Strachan?

HALDEMAN: Get. He says he gets Gordon on uh...

PRESIDENT: ...sending copies to him...

HALDEMAN: ...sending material to him. Uh, he still implies at least that Gordon knew about it before, you know, he knew what they were gonna do.

PRESIDENT: In other words --

HALDEMAN: Gordon tells me he did not.

PRESIDENT: Did he say he will testify that he (unintelligible) sent materials down to the White House --that's the point.

HALDEMAN: If he's asked, he will, yes.

PRESIDENT: He'll be asked, right. Cause that's what they will say he sent to the White House and what would Strachan say?

HALDEMAN: Strachan has no problem with that. He'll say after the fact there are materials that I can now, uh, surmise were what he's referring to but they were not at the time identified in any way as being the result of wiretaps and I did not know they were. There was a, they were amongst tons of stuff. Jeb makes the point. He said, I am sure Gordon never sent them to Bob because they were all trash. There was nothing in 'em. He said the tragedy of this whole thing is that it produced nothing. (Pause)

PRESIDENT: Who else did he send reports to - Mitchell?
(Pause)

HALDEMAN: The thing I got before was that he sent them either to that one went to him and one went to Strachan.

PRESIDENT: Suppose our problem there is, uh, if, uh, they claim that the reports came to me in the White House basically they'll say to your office what will you say then?

HALDEMAN: They can. Remember, this doesn't ever have to come out.

PRESIDENT: I know, if they don't ask it in the Grand Jury.

HALDEMAN: if they do ask it in the Grand Jury...

PRESIDENT: Why?

HALDEMAN: ...the Grand Jury is secret. The only way it will come out is if they decide to indict Strachan and, and put him up for trial. He, Jeb, is (unintelligible) they have no interest in Strachan at all - and they have all this stuff. But that

they don't, they feel, and I can see why they would -Strachan is a, is a, like a secretary. He's useful as a witness.

PRESIDENT: That's his connection, Strachan, where he sent the materials.

HALDEMAN: Yeah, he implies or has in, uh, earlier stuff he doesn't now, directly. He doesn't say anything now directly in his earlier stuff that Strachan knew about it beforehand Strachan knew they were bugging Watergate. Strachan says he didn't. and Jeb has implied a lot of things that I know aren't true and other things that other people say aren't true so I have no idea whether he believes now that, see I think one of the problems Jeb has is that he's not sure what is true at this point.

PRESIDENT: He tells you this?

HALDEMAN: He tells me that he's sorry about this because it will, it'll probably hurt Dean

PRESIDENT: and Strachan

HALDEMAN: and it may, and it may hurt Gordon. You see that's the kind of thing, you know, from his judgment he's looking at things a little different now. Now, he, he thought that there was a monumental problem if word ever got out that he, that he had doled \$8,000 out to buy Edith Evner books. Now I don't consider that a problem at all. (Pause) We know why we were buying them. We were buying them to try and get it on the best seller list. But, but the argument of why we were buying this is that it is a book

that was of great interest to our supporters. It was, it was used to give them some background information; we bought a lot of copies then we could send to people, which we did.

PRESIDENT: Has anything come out yet, uh, I hope that something has implied that there, these copies are available to the Watergate or, ah, to the White House or not or has that not been said yet? He could have had but I suppose not.

HALDEMAN: I don't know. I am sure it's been implied. You know, all of us had, all of them had access to everything. Now, the broad implication is clearly there.

PRESIDENT: (Laugh) Everybody is sure trying to get in the act. (Unintelligible) message here from Steve that John Puttnam thought about the Watergate and had some ideas he would like to pass on.

HALDEMAN: So Bebe tells him to call you direct. Just, Bebe knows better than that.

PRESIDENT: Well, Bebe's uh, I think listen to him very often he may have (unintelligible) the first time it's ever happened. I just hope that Steve (unintelligible/**REMOVED**).

HALDEMAN: (Laugh) The funny thing about all of this our, our real problem

PRESIDENT: here is with our friends, Bob, isn't it.

HALDEMAN: Um hmm. I don't mean Bebe, but I mean quote the Republicans etcetera, etcetera.

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Of course we've got, naturally, the uh,
press. And you know I mean this God damn
Ellsberg film. I just don't know what the
hell to do. That's the problem.

(Unintelligible)

REEL END