

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log

(rev. 10/06)

Transcript #1: Parts of a conversation among President Nixon, Wallace F. Bennett, Alexander P. Butterfield, Eugene S. Cowen, John D. Ehrlichman, H. R. Haldeman, James D. Hodgson, Henry A. Kissinger, Russell B. Long, Clark MacGregor, Elliot L. Richardson, and John G. Veneman in the Oval Office between 5:28 pm and 6:36 pm on April 26, 1971.

Conversation No. 489-21#1

Long: Mr. President, I wanna thank --.

President: For three? [Unintelligible].

Long: Give you my compliments, uh, [unintelligible] who are demonstratin' in that --.

President: [Unintelligible].

Long: Course I think they're worst-smellin', that bunch a' hippies, uh, a little bit bet-, a little bit closer quarters than you have.

President: They have a closer view.

Long: Yes, sir, but, uh, they've got, uh, [unintelligible] I [unintelligible].

President: Yeah, oh, yeah.

Long: Tryin' to [unintelligible] none of my business, but --.

President: Well, just so they don't, just so they don't, I don't, just so they don't destroy anything. I, I say let 'em talk. They're not doin' any damage, are they?

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Long: Well, I just want --.

Bennett: One, one group has been throwing red pr-, red paint all over Barry Goldwater=s office.

Unknown: 'Bout how many?

Bennett: Five.

Unknown: [Unintelligible] he already had [unintelligible]. [laughs]

Unknown: [Unintelligible].

President: Lemme tell ya, you, uh, we're gonna do the right thing here, Russell. We got to, ya know? You know this, uh, I got a very interesting point, uh, I thought --.

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Conv. No. 489-21#2 (cont.)

Transcript #2: Parts of a conversation among President Nixon, Wallace F. Bennett, Alexander P. Butterfield, Eugene S. Cowen, John D. Ehrlichman, H. R. Haldeman, James D. Hodgson, Henry A. Kissinger, Russell B. Long, Clark MacGregor, Elliot L. Richardson, and John G. Veneman in the Oval Office between 5:28 pm and 6:36 pm on April 26, 1971.

Conversation No. 489-21#2

President: You know, uh, Russell, 'n', uh, Wallace, I just wanna say this you know, you see those young people down there, 'n' you gotta feel the witness, they really are. I, uh, can tell it from the pictures on Saturday paradin' up these young, peaceful, purple heart, 'cept I didn't appreciate tearin' down the forty-eight flags around the Monument 'n' hoistin' the Viet Cong flag 'n' burnin', some burned ours, and so forth. But ya know, maybe that's just a childish pranks these days, but nevertheless, and the, I think to really get the context of what they are trying to tell us 'n' by that, me, is that they're against this war. My answer to them is, "I'm against this war, but see where I am, I happen to be, because of my background, which is Quaker, against all wars. And that=s why I am trying to end this war in a way that we will have a reasonable chance to avoid other wars." That's what the issue is. The issue is not being against this war. God knows, this country hasn't wanted any war. Y'know, in World War One, World War Two, Korea, and this one, we didn't start any of 'em. We only went there after the others came in, right? In each instance, the United States has come to the aid of other nations whose freedom was threatened.

Unknown: That's right.

President: Now we may have done the job, we may have botched it, we may have done things that are wrong, but our motives were right. So at the present time, let's not have any debate about who's against this war. The question is, who is going to

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have the perspective and, frankly, let me say, the guts to see it through. So we end this war in a way that may avoid some other wars, because it would be so easy, and then, so easy, well, on January twenty-first, Russell, nineteen sixty-nine, I coulda walked into this office - Elliott was here - and I could say, "We're ending the war in Vietnam," and say, AJohnson and Kennedy got us in and we=re gettin= us out.≡ Everybody would=ve cheered. And the Communists would=ve marched into Saigon in about six months and they would=ve slaughtered about a million and a half or two million Catholics and others, 'n' then the American people would've said, "Why?" ask themselves, "Why?" Don't ever think that wouldn't've happened. So we have to do it correctly. And we are! That's the other point.

Long: You're doin' a great --.

President: Do you realize that we're gonna bring out one hundred and eighty-four thousand by December? Do you realize that our casualties are one-fifth proportionate as they were? Now they're goin' down, uh, this week they'll be less again. Uh, but the point is that, uh, what we're really trying to do, uh, and, uh, God knows your, your heart goes out to these kids, to the veterans and others who, the war's a horrible experience, particularly for, well for those who are in it. [Unintelligible]. This country too often has ended wars and lost peaces. By God, we're gonna end this war 'n' win a peace. That's what we're doing. So we're trying, so --.