

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log

(rev. 10/06)

Transcript #1: Part of a conversation among President Nixon, H. R. Haldeman, Manuel (Manolo) Sanchez, and Ronald L. Ziegler in the Oval Office between 1:07 pm and 1:47 pm on April 28, 1971.

Conversation No. 491-11#1

President: I just had a horrible thought. I was thinking, those poor guys down in Potomac Park must be cold as hell today.

Haldeman: That bothers you?

President: [Unintelligible] the hell out of me. Manolo!

Sanchez: Yes, sir.

President: It's so cold - those fellas down, down, in the, down in the park, uh, you know, the temperature. Too bad about it, don't you think?

Sanchez: I think either way that, uh, [unintelligible].

Haldeman: [Laughs] I don't guess they're too comfortable out there.

President: Good.

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Transcript #2: Part of a conversation among President Nixon, H. R. Haldeman, and Ronald L. Ziegler in the Oval Office between 1:07 pm and 1:47 pm on April 28, 1971.

Conversation No. 491-11#2

President: Are the members of the press giving board and room to these bastards down in, uh, Potomac Park? Suppose they are.

Ziegler: I don't know. I expect some of 'em would be willing to do it.

President: Sure.

Ziegler: Let 'em get their --.

President: Fine.

Ziegler: Uh, th-, th-, the spark is not out there, but most o' the press corps, though.

Haldeman: They arrested about two hundred of 'em this morning at the Selective Service.

President: Why?

Haldeman: They're blocking the entrance.

President: Good. That, that's terrific. But, but the Supreme Court's action's right. They cannot block the entrance to the Supreme Court, an' that was right. And the rest of these people gonna do that, they=re not gonna stop this Government. [Unintelligible] tomorrow night.

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Conv. No. 491-11#2 (cont.)

- Haldeman: Civil Service is gonna ask, uh, uh, if we're gonna have a liberal leave policy on Monday. Our plan is to have Hampton answer that question to any agency that asks with a basic "no," that Monday will be business as usual.
- President: That's right.
- Haldeman: There will not be a liberal leave policy.
- President: Absolutely. Absolutely.
- Haldeman: 'Cause what they're doing is they're handing out leaflets at these blockade points, that they plan to block on Monday, to Government workers, saying, "Join with us in protesting the war. You won't be able to get to work anyway. So don't go to work on Monday."
- President: Hmm.
- Haldeman: I think our policy has gotta be that, uh, you know, so you get --
- President: Get docked.
- Haldeman: -- or you don't get paid.
- President: Ya get docked. You're goddamn right.
- Haldeman: Then it'd be --
- President: [Unintelligible].

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Conv. No. 491-11#2 (cont.)

Haldeman: -- then after if there is a traffic jam, we=ll be liberal on being paid for it.

President: Sure, sure, sure, sure, but let 'em create, you've gotta play it the other way, or they'll all sit on their ass at home. I mean, I know these Government workers. They sit on their asses in the office.

Ziegler: It'd be like a snow alert for 'em.

President: Huh? What?

Ziegler: It'd be like a snow alert for 'em. Say hello and, uh, [unintelligible].

President: I know, I know. We, we've all been through it. We've all been through it. Well, it's not just true of Government workers. [Unintelligible], like everybody else they're gonna sit on their fannies if you give 'em the opportunity to. The kids do. You know, "Gee whiz! We got a recess today. Earthquake alarm! Fire alarm! Boy, ain't it great. The school burnt down." [Unintelligible].

Haldeman: Ya know that raises the question of cancelling White House tours. That means we don't do that.

President: No, sir. No, sir.

Haldeman: And that poses a security problem. The whole y-, they don- --

President: How?

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Conv. No. 491-11#2 (cont.)

Haldeman: -- fortunately, they don't have tours on Monday anyway. If they jam things up on Monday, we can as a reaction close the White House tours, if we feel we have to for Tuesday.

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: But we sure [unintelligible].

President: We haven't been bombed yet [unintelligible].

Haldeman: So as of now we could say the White House tours are open as usual. No change in that.

President: Sure. I'd just let them keep on. I, I, I dunno. [Unintelligible].

Haldeman: Boy, I agree.

President: They're --

Ziegler: I think this might be one too.

President: They're fired.

Ziegler: [Unintelligible] get a little disturbed.

President: They're fired.

Haldeman: I'm all for Barry Goldwater. I think he's absolutely right in closing his office.

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Conv. No. 491-11#2 (cont.)

President: [Unintelligible] I know he is.

Haldeman: Force some attention on the thing.

President: He's tryin' to tell 'em, by God.

Haldeman: Well, he's sayin' if you gonna let 'em throw red paint on, in my place and terrorize my secretaries and ruffle through my papers, I'm not gonna sit here and leave it open.

President: Good point. But he isn't blaming us, is he?

Haldeman: No, no!

Ziegler: The thing I'd like to see is a guy go to, like Hart, get up before those fellows on the Capitol steps --

Haldeman: Yeah.

Ziegler: -- with the people givin' him a rough time.

President: Did they?

Ziegler: Yes, and he, I don't think he came off very well.

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Conv. No. 491-11#2 (cont.)

Haldeman: He was tryin', he was sorta giving them a rough time. He says, "You keep this up, and we won't be able to get a vote through. Now, you gotta, you gotta cooperate with us here. We'll make 'em end the war." And then they keep sayin', "Well, why do you think, why don't you filibuster, why don't you stop the work of the Senate?≡ Let >em see even in the Cong- --.

President: You know what these guys are goin= through, Bob? These guys are goin= through what the university presidents have gone through.

Haldeman: Yeah.

President: And they just, they tried this permissive stuff --

Haldeman: [Unintelligible].

President: -- and it will not work.

Haldeman: That's exactly [unintelligible].

Ziegler: And I think that they should go through with it. In other words they --

Haldeman: Right.

Ziegler: -- they're looking --

President: {Unintelligible}.

Ziegler: -- that's exactly right --

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Conv. No. 491-11#2 (cont.)

President: [Unintelligible].

Ziegler: -- because they're lookin', they're lookin' --

President: They're not gonna come down here. [Unintelligible].

Ziegler: -- that's exactly what they're lookin' for.

Haldeman: That means our guys too - the Hugh Scotts [unintelligible].

Ziegler: That=s right, because they=re looking --.

President: [Unintelligible]

Ziegler: All they have to d-, say in terms of the press flow, is, AI met with the President today and talked about it,≅ and bang! The news thrust is to, to the White House immediately.

President: Do we, uh, have we announced we're gonna have a leaders' meeting Tuesday morning?

Ziegler: Yes, we did.

President: I don't want those bastards comin' down here then. Well, I just won't talk.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible]. We'll have different agendas; just let me be in there.

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Conv. No. 491-11#2 (cont.)

President: No. I'm gonna, I'm just gonna say, "Gentlemen, I'm not gonna discuss this matter. That's a matter for, uh, to discuss with the Attorney General." Don't ya think that's the way we handle it?

Haldeman: Yes.

Ziegler: Um-hum. Absolutely.

Haldeman: And don't have the Attorney General there to discuss it. Don't allow the matter to --.

President: [Unintelligible]. If you want to have a meeting with the Attorney General, fine, but the White House is stayin= out o= this. This is a problem for the Congress an= for each department.

Haldeman: 'Cause if you just, if you say anything, then he will run out and say, "workin' this out with the President."

President: [Unintelligible] let 'em throw the buck to us.

Haldeman: By Tuesday, the fat'll be in the fire. It will be --.

President: What do ya mean?

Haldeman: Whatever's gonna happen will of, have happened enough on Monday that we'll know where we, where we are.

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Conv. No. 491-11#2 (cont.)

Ziegler: You know, you look outside and you see what they've been able to do up to this point.

President: Yeah.

Ziegler: I don't --

Haldeman: Well [unintelligible].

Ziegler: -- I don't know how-much you're gonna be able to do.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible] crowd over the weekend.

President: There are not many here; that's my point.

Haldeman: Not now, but they'll get 'em here.

President: It's cold as hell though.

Haldeman: It'll warm up too, probably.

President: I hope it stays cold [unintelligible] the bastards.

Haldeman: Mr. President, met your line and staff --.

President: Some of 'em died. One guy's in the morgue. Somebody did die.

Ziegler: Yes, sir.

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Conv. No. 491-11#2 (cont.)

Haldeman: Well, obviously [unintelligible] --

President: MacGregor --

Haldeman: -- walked in there --

President: -- and MacGregor said, "Is this just a rumor?" [Laughter]

Haldeman: -- so Ron says, he says, "Ya can't say that if ya don't have evidence," and Ron said, "Well, my neighbor's got one in his morgue -- [Laughs]

Ziegler: I said his mortuary. [Laughs]

Haldeman: [Laughs] -- mortuary."

Ziegler: Right, it's true.

President: What is it, dope?

Ziegler: Dope, um-hum.

President: Gee, that's criminal.

Ziegler: Right.

Haldeman: There's, the problem is, they make this from strychnine, ya know, the LSD.

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President: [Unintelligible] coverage, the, the, the [unintelligible] canera crews stay away from down there? Why don=t they go down there and take pictures of that? They took pictures of the veterans. Isn't that fair treatment?

Ziegler: [Unintelligible] Some of 'em are down there, I just think that --

Haldeman: Some of 'em are gonna get put on the morning [unintelligible] news --

Ziegler: -- puttin' the, givin' the, gettin' a lot, uh, uh, uh, they're beginning to, to, uh, uh, the editors and so forth are beginning to, to feel a little guilty about comin' around on the thing, I think. But the film peop- --.

President: Whaddaya mean 'bout, guilty 'bout coming around? How do you mean?

Ziegler: Well, I mea-, they know they haven't put it on and they know they should.

President: Well, maybe it's just as well they put it on. I don't know [unintelligible].

Haldeman: No. No. I think if it's gonna be treated [unintelligihle].

President: You mean they, they should put it on because it w`ould look bad, ya mean?

Haldeman: That=s right [unintelligible].

Ziegler: I think, I think they should put it on because it's a legitimate story.

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- President: Just like Scali said, everything last week was legitimate. So they should run on [unintelligible] every night on television, except for the night they kill Donald Duck. Huh?
- Ziegler: Well, I'll tell you, there's a, there's a feeling, however, that the veterans' thing was overplayed and the, and the, uh, and the, uh, uh --
- President: Demonstration.
- Ziegler: -- demonstration. But, I, uh, particularly carried, uh, in the mind of Sidey, whose talkin' all over about it.
- President: [Unintelligible].
- Ziegler: For example, well, we went doom to, to, uh, North Carolina with Rather and Helen Thomas and Doug Cornell and --.
- President: Oh, they all went?
- Ziegler: Oh, yeah.
- Haldeman: Well, this is [unintelligible] --
- President: [Unintelligible].

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- Ziegler: Right. On that panel I mentioned. And Sidey - we were lookin' at the paper on the thing - and Sidey took the paper - it was a Sunday paper - and he threw it down on the plane and he said, [pounds table] "Now this is irresponsible news coverage." He said, "This is overplayed." He said, "There's no reason why this thing should be given --."
- President: Why doesn't he write that?
- Ziegler: He may. Sidey may write this, now, I mean, he, ya know.
- President: He sometimes does.
- Haldeman: Yeah, he does.
- Ziegler: But, the, th-, the, a guy like Sidey's, uh --.
- President: Ya gotta remember, too, he's got a son of a bitch of an editor, who might just burn his ass. He's, he's, he's gotta look, he's gotta brownnose for, get to the top too, ya know. He wants to be editor one day. [Unintelligible] said he got there with his half-assed attitudes.
- Ziegler: A guy like, uh, Sidey --.
- President: I don't think Sidey gets in as much as he does. I've not been one of his defenders but I understand now that the editorial control of Life-Time is still, still rough, don't you?
- Haldeman: Sidey gets in a fair amount of pretty good stuff.

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President: What's that when a guy like Sidey, Sidey has an influence on others.

Ziegler: No, but he talks about it, ya know, and it gets in general, uh, it doesn't affect, really, what gets on the network news, but it, it, it affects [unintelligible].