

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF**Tape Subject Log***(rev. 10/06)*

Transcript #1: Part of a conversation between President Nixon and Charles W. Colson in the Oval Office between 5:05 pm and 5:14 pm on May 6, 1971.

Conversation No. 493-20#1

President: Yeah, I, uh, I think that the, uh, the [Edward M. (ATed≅)] Kennedy thing, uh, that he thought it was wrong [unintelligible] the decision, uh, from the White House in [unintelligible] any one of the candidates uh, the problem is that once it=s done, we then expect to sort of comment on [Edmund S.] Muskie and [George S.] McGovern [unintelligible], uh, he will, he, so he=s gonna indicate strong support of our, the position that I take. So that leaves, the, it leaves wi-, somebody else. But it seems to me, Chuck, that the place here that he=s gotta be taken on, is by his colleagues in the Senate. That=s a hell of a goddamn statement for him to make.

Colson: Oh, fantastic, I --.

President: What, what, they won=t even speak up, or they all such afruids, or what?

Colson: Well, as you know, Mr. President, they hate to attack the [unintelligible].

President: [Unintelligible]

Colson: Once they do that, they do --.

President: Make it a House matter then, for Christ=s sakes. There=s, er, uh, [Robert J.] Dole. You, you can=t use Dole? Dole=ll like this.

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Colson: I-I=ve gotta say that coming out of the National Committee I did do that.

President: Is [Spiro T.] Agnew worth going?

Colson: [Unintelligible]. No, I think Agnew should not do it.

President: Because of the youth thing --.

Colson: Right.

President: That=s right. That=s what he=s playing to, he=s pam-pampering the youth.

Colson: Normal youth, normal youth.

President: What in the name of God did he do this for?

Colson: I could keep, uh, I personally believe that he didn=t intend to do it. He gave this speech at Iona College last night.

President: Yeah.

Colson: I called Pete[r J.] Brennan this morning.

President: That=s up in New York.

Colson: Yes, sir. [Unintelligible] I had no response about [John A.] Jack Mulcahy at the time.

President: No, I didn=t.

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- Colson: And, uh, I called Pete Brennan this morning to ask if, as you asked me to last night, you know --
- President: Um-hum.
- Colson: -- if we could start a little parade in New York. He thought we might. But, in the course of it, he said, uh, AGod,≡ he said, AI was at Iona last night and listened to Ted Kennedy.≡ He said, AIt was the worst speech I=ve ever heard in my life.≡ He said, he said, AHe=s a Commie.≡ And I said, AWell, Pete, he=s, he=s pretty far off,≡ uh --
- President: Um-hum. Um-hum.
- Colson: -- and he said, AIt was terrible.≡ I think what happened is: he gave the speech, he gave it off the cuff --
- President: Um-hum.
- Colson: -- and it got over the wire service --
- President: Umh.
- Colson: -- this morning. Very minor. He did not issue a press release, which he normally does. And I think that, when it got on the wires, then he decided to put out the speech, after it had been, part of it had come out. I, I just think he=s, I thought he was too smart politically to do this. I think he=s on the wrong side of --

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President: Well --.

Colson: -- the issue.

President: I dunno. Has [Hubert H.] Humphrey moved on it yet? Muskie? Are they all startin= to squeal about this?

Colson: No, sir. Uh, not without --.

President: It=s a violation o= rights. Let >em get out there.

Colson: Well, most -- .

President: I think the American people are -- I dunno, I may be wrong -- I do not believe that the people that disagree with -- hell, they supported [Richard J.] Daley! Do you know that?

Colson: Sure.

President: We all thought [laughs] the statesmen that, uh, everybody was gonna think Daley was a horrible person, and I found -- we polled it quickly after the convention, thank God, before, before too many people popped off. We found, for Christ=s sakes, the people generally thought Daley was right to bust those people.

Colson: I remember, because you were going to Chicago to --

President: >Member?

Colson: -- open your campaign --.

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President: Yeah, I didn=t, I didn=t take him on, I didn=t take Daley on, when I went in there
--

Colson: No, you, you were, and you got a great welcome from the police, which was a --

President: That=s right.

Colson: -- hell of a good thing.

President: Because, uh, they were glad to have us back. Now, one thing that I do think that oughta go, uh, I do think, Chuck, that you=ve got to get a column or a statement, or something very simple that, just chapter and verse, the, the Communist support of this thing. Hanoi=s support, Madame [Nguyen Thi] Binh=s support, the, uh, in other words, the, the, the --.

Colson: Yeah.

President: Somebody can write it up.

Colson: Yeah.

President: Maybe you can get [Patrick J.] Buchanan to just, just go over and they=re, they=re bound to have statements, uh, the, uh, and, and, and what you=ve really got to do is to hand to [Lyndon K. (AMort≅)] Allin. It=s what it is, you know. Look, most o= those little bastards couldn=t do, not unless somebody was payin=. Now we know who pays. Sometimes Howard Stein, people like that, but also the Commies are in it.

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Colson: No question the cash goes into --

President: No question about it.

Colson: -- cash goes into various public leaders.

President: [Unintelligible] a lot of other things. And, uh, could you, could you get something done on that score, or is somebody already doin= something?

Colson: We=re already doing it, Mr. President. [Unintelligible].

President: The Commie support of this thing, not only Ha-, but Hanoi supports it, the other statements, Madame Binh supports it, you know. Xuan Thuy supported it --.

Colson: Well --.

President: The enemy, carrying the Viet Cong flag. Thank God they finally got one picture of the Viet Cong flag. Goddamn networks haven=t been saying that, you know.

Colson: No, we ought to --.

President: And always refer to it as the Communist Viet Cong flag, never the Viet Cong flag, the Communist flag.

Colson: That, uh --.

President: That=s murder.

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Colson: I=d gamble, I=d go with it. The news of the last few days, the farther, the Communist, uh, the Viet Cong flag is, uh, the current *Life*, *Life* and *Time* had that fantastic picture.

President: But do people know?

Colson: Oh, it=s right out here in *Time*. It=s, AThe Viet Cong flag flies over the Capitol.≡ It was a damaging picture. And it was on television last night. I, uh, I think that=s coming through, uh, we=ve had --

President: [Unintelligible]

Colson: -- two good columns, Mr. President. One, uh, was, of course, that AMuskie and the Trotskyites≡ column --

President: Yeah.

Colson: -- that [Rowland] Evans and [Robert D.] Novak did.

President: I know about that.

Colson: We got about forty thousand of those judiciously distributed. [Victor] Lasky is doing one for us right on this line. Uh, Gholson, uh, John Gholson, Gholson of Allentown has done one. We, we=ve got a few of >em going and, of course, every time we do, we mail >em. Uh, we=ve fed some speeches to Sam[uel W.] Yorty, who=s taken this [unintelligible] on --

President: Is he?

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Colson: -- and, uh, he gets some press when he does that.

President: I notice the only Senator that I know who seems to speak up is [James B.] Allen, of, uh, uh, uh, of Alabama. I see he spoke up and said he=d ship >em all to Hanoi.

Colson: Uh, there >ve been some fairly good statements, but, uh --.

President: What, by our side too?

Colson: By our side.

President: By our Republicans?

Colson: Yes, sir. There were some good ones yesterday, but --

President: Nobody picked >em up.

Colson: -- press didn=t pick >em up.

President: God damn the press! Isn=t it awful? Isn=t it awful? Well, God damn them anyway.

Colson: The only way you get >em is, you just, you, uh, when [Hugh] Scott spoke the day before and attacked Muskie, uh, we weren=t gonna get any network. No network was gonna pick it up. I had John [A.] Scali call ABC [American Broadcasting Company] --

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President: And they picked it up.

Colson: -- and they ran it, but only because Scali told >em. They never would=ve otherwise.

President: Isn=t that something?

Colson: You just, you just have to fight away at these guys every inch of the way and, uh -
-

President: Well, nevertheless, the networks, not intending to do so, have, by reason of their playing this damn thing, I think, have gotten the picture to the country. I think --.

Colson: There=s no doubt about that, sir.

President: I, now, you=ve made your calls around and w= did a little polling on it, but, uh, your calls indicate -- now what [Henry] Brandon say? Brandon pissed off?

Colson: Very, and, uh --.

President: [Unintelligible] think that he can get through to him? Does he think these are horrible people down there?

Colson: Terrible people.

President: Does he think we=re too rough on >em?

Colson: No.

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- President: [Unintelligible]. Let=s start, uh, let=s start something like, let=s, uh, let=s give, uh, [Jerry V.] Wilson a medal or some damn thing.
- Colson: Well, I=ve suggested --
- President: Something like that for him.
- Colson: -- I=ve suggested putting Wilson on AMeet the Press≅ this Sunday. [George W.] Romney is on. And, uh --.
- President: Oh, God, get him off.
- Colson: So we can drop Romney and try to put W-, we=re trying now to put Wilson on in place of Romney. And, I think at the right time you should have him in. I think that, uh, uh, Wilson is, uh, he=s a folk hero type. He=s, he=s got --
- President: [Unintelligible] high school dropout.
- Colson: -- he=s got the, the, what the Jewish people call chutzpa. He=s got the chutzpa.
- President: What do you call it?
- Colson: Sh-sh-shutzpah, shuts-, chutzpa.
- President: Yeah, good.
- Colson: But it=s, it=s a, a little pizzazz. He=s got a little bit of that, uh, uh --.
- President: He=s a good man.

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Colson: Oh --.

President: That=s right.

Colson: Terrific, the, it is across the country, I assure you, sir.

President: You called around the country. I told [H. R. (ABob≡)] Haldeman this morning and your --

Colson: Absolutely.

President: -- your people believe that, uh --

Colson: That, this, this comes from liberals and from moderates and from conservatives. They just, uh --.

President: Yeah.

Colson: See, what has come across television, we don=t realize it, because we=re very close to it, but last night on ABC news they had the picture of the demonstrators up on the Capitol. They had a demonstrator standing stark naked --

President: Um-hum.

Colson: -- which I=ve never seen on television.

President: Was it on television?

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Colson: On television.

President: Good!

Colson: And they had everybody singing the, uh, A God Bless America, ≡ the protesters with their finger up like this. It was an atrocious thing to see on television.

President: Who, who carried it, ABC?

Colson: ABC.

President: Why in hell didn't CBS [Columbia Broadcasting System] carry it? Huh? That was --.

Colson: >Cause they carry different scenes, but --

President: Sons-o--bitches!

Colson: -- but, but it's still getting across. People are seeing this, and everybody I talked to has, has seen it and has said, A Jesus, good for you guys, keep going. ≡

President: Yeah.

Colson: From unusual sources, you know, a couple of, well, a pollster, New England type, dealt with for twenty years. Uh --.

President: Upholster?

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Colson: Oh, he takes polls --

President: Yeah.

Colson: -- John [F.] Becker --

President: Oh, a pollster. I know --

Colson: -- pol- --

President: I know, I know Becker.

Colson: -- and he=s very good. An, uh, he says that, he=s, he=s a liberal Republican, but he said, AGod, you=ve, you=ve,≡ uh, Ayou upped yourself five points across New England with this,≡ he said, because pe-, it=s what people are talking about. They=re saying, ALook at those goddamn radicals in Washington.≡

President: Hm.

Colson: And, uh, AHe=s dealt with >em firmly in the past, that=s what we want.≡

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Transcript #2: Part of a conversation between President Nixon, Charles W. Colson, and Ronald L. Ziegler in the Oval Office between 5:14 pm and 5:18 pm on May 6, 1971

Conversation No. 493-20#2

President: The [Edward M. (ATed≅)] Kennedy thing wasn=t raised?

Ziegler: No.

President: Well, I=ll be goddamned.

Ziegler: Which is, you know, probably that --.

President: It=s all right.

Ziegler: The posture=s there.

President: Let=s let him, uh. Yeah, the thing is, Chuck, [unintelligible]

Ziegler: I didn=t wanna bother.

President: The impression I don=t want --

Ziegler: [Clears throat]

President: -- the impression just to be that the, that the, uh, that I=m concerned about is that I don=t want -- sit down [unintelligible] go over and see these Congressmen right now. I don=t want the impression that, that the, uh, that, that this being tough on

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these people is just the idea of, uh, [Jerry V.] Wilson and, uh, the Attorney General. It's my idea, you know, I, I gave the signal to everybody. I said, ANow bust these bastards.≡ Is that getting across or is that across in your briefing?

Ziegler: Well, you said it in your press conference.

President: I know I said it, but is it across?

Colson: No, I don't think, I don't think the fact that you gave that order yourself is across but it's a, but --

President: Do they know I'm standing firm?

Colson: Everybody knows you're standing firm.

President: All right. Let's [unintelligible].

Colson: [Unintelligible]

President: I don't care about the order. Uh, do they, are they very sure that we've, uh, you see, they, are they, do they know that if it, if we hadn't, I didn't back it, that they wouldn't be standing firm?

Colson: We were --.

Ziegler: I've got a group o= press in my office right now with --

President: Good.

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Conv. No. 493-20#2 (cont.)

Ziegler: -- [John D.] Ehrlichman, where we're moving this subtly through. And --

President: Yeah.

Ziegler: -- the wires, >n= the networks, and so forth.

President: That=s right.

Ziegler: See, that=s what we're going right now.

President: You see, the point is that, uh, without, that the President is responsible basically for Washington, DC. I said that on the day I took office. I said it in the campaign. I=m going to meet the responsibility to keep this Government going, I=m going to meet the responsibility to protect the right of citizens to go to and from their homes and their places of work without being molested, and we shall meet it with firmness and restraint. We had the right combination, firmness and restraint. This is an example to other cities in the country, period.

Colson: Well, of course, the thing, the thing about Kennedy=s stories, which will be, uh, I, I think he=ll discredit himself with it, although we=ve gotta help him along. The, that, what he=s really saying, which is different than a political attack, that it was different than anything anybody else has said. He said, AThe Attorney General suspended the Constitution,≅ and the Attorney General, of course, was acting on your orders. Now that, for any Senator, is a, is a pretty wild charge, and that it=s only in a dictatorship that you suspend the Constitution. That, I --.

President: What does he think the others were doing?

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Colson: Well, no, he said --.

President: They were exercising their constitutional rights?

Colson: Sure. He said, AWhat they were doing was just expressing the frustrations which all of us can understand that --

President: Yeah.

Colson: -- young people have these days.≡

President: Yeah, AE-except I don=t approve,≡ he said.

Colson: Well, he had said, AWe --≡

President: Yeah.

Colson: A -- we can=t condone --.≡

[An unknown person enters, speaks to the President, and leaves]

Ziegler: I think the President has postured, Chuck, at least the way I --.

President: You gotta be damn sure it=s firm.

Ziegler: [Clears throat] Well, we, I=m gonna go back in >n= work with John on this, but I think the President=s postured from the very outset on this, of setting the tone, setting the guideline, delegating responsibility [clears throat] all the way through.

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And of staying in touch and following it >n=, >n=, ya know, although he was not there making this [unintelligible].

President: Firmness and strength, that=s the point. And firmness >n= strength. Result: Government kept working, no serious injuries --

Colson: No.

President: -- and nobody was killed.

Colson: Right.

President: Correct? Okay. Fine.

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Transcript #3: Part of a conversation between President Nixon and Charles W. Colson in the Oval Office between 5:18 pm and 5:22 pm on May 6, 1971.

Conversation No. 493-20#3

President: He really feels we're on the right side of this issue, and [John F.] Becker feels so, too. He says even in New England --.

Colson: Yeah, Becker said in all the New England states, said [unintelligible].

President: Yeah.

Colson: Yeah, he said all the New England states, he said that, uh, and I talked to two people in Chicago whose political judgment I value, and they had exactly the same reaction, that --

President: Um-hum.

Colson: -- [Richard A.] Dick Moore got similar feelings out of California here. Uh, Cooper Holt is traveling through, uh --

President: Yeah.

Colson: -- Tennessee, uh --

President: VFW [Veterans of Foreign Wars].

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Conv. No. 493-20#3 (cont.)

Colson: -- Florida, the VFW, he said that, just a, the first thing people talked about, when you say you=re from Washington, talked about the demonstrations, and they say, ABy God, that=s good that they were put down.≡ The first time, really, that they, they=ve been put down hard, and it=s --.

President: But we didn=t lose --.

Colson: Yeah, and I think the people --.

President: The colleges hadn=t put >em down, the universities didn=t put >em down, the cities didn=t put >em down, uh, you know what I mean? So I, we went right in there, we arrested the bastards and stopped it, and I think it was right.

Colson: Absolutely right.