

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

Transcript #1: Part of a conversation among President Nixon, H. R. Haldeman, and Ronald L. Ziegler in the Oval Office between 10:53 am and 11:00 am on May 8, 1971.

Conversation No. 494-4#1

President: Well, you're, you're right. We just go right ahead on the PR thing, Bob. Don't worry about that. We're gonna --.

Haldeman: We just, we just gotta do it.

President: [Unintelligible].

Haldeman: We'll get, we get hit --

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- in the face every time.

President: Ron, one thing I wanted to be sure that, uh, that you, did, uh, did Dean go out and call Wilson?

Ziegler: No, I talked to the Mayor and the Chief, and I'm gettin' very --

President: Oh, yeah.

Ziegler: -- [unintelligible].

President: Oh, yeah.

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Conv. No. 494-4#1 (cont.)

Ziegler: -- [unintelligible] to them right now.

President: Dean is, Dean was there, and he saw it all.

Ziegler: Right, I got a --.

President: Take a very hard line, you know.

Ziegler: Yes, sir.

President: [Unintelligible] I told them that I wanted to be sure that everybody knew that this could be the policy of this [unintelligible].

Haldeman: Boy, it's just come through so loud and clear, that a way. The few people that have gone the other way have just --

President: Yeah, well.

Haldeman: -- Gene Tunney, I mean, uh --

President: Well, the point is --

Haldeman: -- Jack Tunney [unintelligible].

President: -- the point is, though, the point, though, is that we have not identified [unintelligible] enough with a strong policy. That=s the problem.

Ziegler: Uh --.

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President: And that's not true.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible].

President: [Unintelligible].

Haldeman: [Unintelligible].

President: [Unintelligible] I checked them last night and they had, they were, they think [unintelligible] at us. But they, uh, they don't realize, you see, we, we read the little things we put out here and the press things and my call to the policemen but you got to, I've got to get up and say it now and then, you see, and, uh, I feel very strongly about this. I always have and I, and sometimes you just gotta frankly do it. I [unintelligible] say that. You mustn't worry about it, you see, Ron. Don't worry about that.

Ziegler: No, sir.

President: They're gonna yell. For thirty days you're gonna have every civil rights son-of-a-bitch saying, "Well, why didn't they, uh, my little boy wasn't here for that. He was just in town to look at the cherry blossoms," even though they were gone. Forget it. They're gonna say that anyway.

Ziegler: I --.

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President: You see, we're going to get blamed anyway for it. If you're going to get blamed anyway, take the hard line and stick 'em right in the puss. See, that's the way you have to handle it. And I don't think I --

Ziegler: I --

President: -- [unintelligible] that's got across.

Ziegler: I think the civil rights people are probably gonna yell a little bit. They have here. However, I do think out in the country and that the as-, the association with the, uh, with this on the part of the President because what you said in the press conference happened. And you told that to a lot of people, but it was g-, those who broke the law would be arrested. And that it was going to be dealt with in a firm way and that the Government was going to be kept open. You told that to some sixty million people.

President: Yeah.

Ziegler: And those people know that that happened. So --.

President: Well, right now, [unintelligible] want to know is that I, uh, commended them all for, uh, you know, the usual, and that I, I, what, one thing [unintelligible] wanted it, us, [unintelligible] be understood we [unintelligible], uh, was the, the way this is, will be the policy. It's gonna be the future, this city will be, this is gonna be an open city and, uh, it's gonna be, 's gonna be a safe city. Safe and open. [Unintelligible]. I [unintelligible] Dean has got two or three quotes, I --.

Ziegler: I got them from him then, yes, sir. I [unintelligible] talked to John --.

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President: Protect the right to protest and we [unintelligible] the right not to protest. The right of people to do either. People are not, they're not gonna engage in any illegal con-conduct or they'll go to jail. [Unintelligible] very hard. And they'd say we're trying to [unintelligible]. Hell, no. I've been saying it from the beginning: who the hell gave them the order to do it Saturday night?

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Transcript #2: Part of a conversation between President Nixon and H. R. Haldeman in the Oval Office between 11:00 am and 11:35 am on May 8, 1971.

Conversation No. 494-4#2

President: [Unintelligible] be wrong, but I don't think we've got the identification with this that we needed, that we need. You, you disagree?

Haldeman: Um-hum.

President: You think we have?

Haldeman: Um-hum. [Unintelligible] think it was good to do this. I think it's good to hammer that identification in. Uh, but I think it's, it's very strongly there.

President: Maybe we did.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible] there's, there's a lot --.

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Transcript #3: Part of a conversation between president nixon and h.r. haldeman in the oval office between 11:00 am and 11:35 am on May 8, 1971.

Conversation No. 494-4#3

President: Well, I must say [unintelligible] on this. It's getting the President [unintelligible]. It may be that we're identified on this subject. I, but, by God, after what we did this last week in Washington, I got, ought to be identified as a law-and-order guy, a strong law-and-order guy, no nonsense, no hippies. You know, apart from the war or anything else, that we better not let any bastards run over us. And I wanna be identified that way. I wanna be a tough goddamn cop, with regard to that thing. Now, you get, of course, Finch and Rumsfeld have been out of the city. Now that they'll be back, they'll say, "You're gonna lose the youth vote." You're not gonna use the youth vote --.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible] lose the --.

President: [Unintelligible], Bob, the people, the youth do not like these kids either.

Haldeman: That's right.

President: Does your kid, I bet your kids didn't like these little bastards.

Haldeman: No.

President: Look --

Haldeman: They don't.

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Conv. No. 494-4#3 (cont.)

President: -- they were ripping up, uh, they [unintelligible] some terrible things. They don't like somebody standing nude up there pissin' on the Statue of Liberty.

Haldeman: That's right.

President: Do they?

Haldeman: No.

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Transcript #4: Part of a conversation among President Nixon, John D. Ehrlichman, and H. R. Haldeman in the Oval Office between 11:45 am and 11:49 am on May 8, 1971.

Conversation No. 494-4#4

Erlichman: He [Speaker of the House Carl Albert] made one [a decision] on the Capitol Police arresting the, the demonstrators --

President: Both ways.

Ehrlichman: -- and, and, uh, tried to have it both ways.

[Room noises]

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Transcript #5: Part of a conversation among President Nixon, John D. Ehrlichman, and H. R. Haldeman in the Oval Office between 11:51 am and 12:00 pm on May 8, 1971.

Conversation No. 494-4#5

Ehrlichman: Wasn't that an extraordinary statement by Tunney on the demonstrations?

Haldeman: Yeah. That the, the, just really [unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: Very hard.

President: I had thought that I [unintelligible] on the extended, I just saw that he might [unintelligible] --

Ehrlichman: He made a speech.

President: -- different from Teddy [unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: No, he made a, he made a speech.

President: California?

Ehrlichman: Uh, no, in the Midwest someplace and he --

Haldeman: Very hard.

Ehrlichman: -- very hard line -- said that, uh, uh, the liberal antiwar Senators were now the captives of the crazies.

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Conv. No. 494-4#5 (cont.)

President: Well, I saw that they were crazies.

Ehrlichman: He said that --.

President: He called them the liberal antiwar Senators?

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

President: Well, he's one of 'em!

Ehrlichman: Yup.

President: [Unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: He said that they had, they had been tied ha-, in effect, been tied hand and foot by these last three days of demonstrations. He said that, uh, something to the effect that, uh, uh, tipping over old ladies' cars --

President: Yeah.

Ehrlichman: -- was not the way to persuade the President, that the only way to persuade the President was --

President: [Unintelligible]

Ehrlichman: -- with the majority of the Senate, and he said, "We can't get a majority of the Senate with people like this out in the streets running around." And, uh --.

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Haldeman: It's very, he obviously has better --

President: [Unintelligible].

Haldeman: -- sense than Kennedy does.

Ehrlichman: Yeah, well, he's a mirror image of Kennedy on this.

President: Yeah.

Ehrlichman: He's just --

President: Yeah.

Ehrlichman: -- he's just --.

Haldeman: The opposite.

Ehrlichman: Yup. Hundred --

President: Yeah.

Ehrlichman: -- and eighty degrees.

Haldeman: That may be part of a plan, too.

Ehrlichman: Could be.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible]

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Ehrlichman: Could be.

Haldeman: -- the plan to [unintelligible] plan. [Laughs] Take your hat off [unintelligible].

President: [Unintelligible] think that Kennedy [unintelligible]. Nobody's picked it up.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible] just slipped.

President: Nobody's picked it up?

Ehrlichman: Yup.

President: The press is certainly protecting him on it. If they're, if that's what they're trying to do, I don't know; they should be. Normally, you'd think the press would be praising --

Ehrlichman: Yup.

President: -- him for great statesmanship.

President: They're not, are they?

Ehrlichman: Nope.

Haldeman: They probably know he's wrong.

Ehrlichman: Well, the press doesn't know what to do.

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Conv. No. 494-4#5 (cont.)

President: You don't think so?

Ehrlichman: I don't think so. I, you know, I backgrounded the day before yesterday all over the place here and I had quite a few --.

President: Did you?

Ehrlichman: A large --.

President: [Unintelligible] about?

Ehrlichman: The, the demonstrations and the Presidency.

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Transcript #6: Part of a conversation among President Nixon, John D. Ehrlichman, and H. R. Haldeman in the Oval Office between 11:51 am and 12:00 pm on May 8, 1971.

Conversation No. 494-4#6

Ehrlichman: And it's very interesting, they [news reporters] don't know, they don't know what to think, really, about this demonstration thing. They really don't --.

President: They all supported it, didn't they?

Ehrlichman: Th-, no. No. Some of them very vigorously did not support it.

President: Really?

Ehrlichman: Yup. [Unintelligible].

President: Well, I'd like to see one.

Haldeman: I think they did it for the wrong reason.

President: They're all in here, snarling and snarling.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: Yeah but, but, uh, they're ambivalent and, uh, uh, Kaplow is, uh, I think, the, the epitome of the frustration of the press corps. He's, he's sitting there saying, "But why aren't you willing to just say that if somebody was wrongfully arrested, that you'd regret it≅ --

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President: [Laughs]

Ehrlichman: -- you know and, uh --

President: God damn him. No, sir.

Ehrlichman: -- I said, "Well, that's,- that's a hypothetical, Herb," you know, "Why in the world should I permit an inference from a hypothetical?" I said, [unintelligible].

President: He was [unintelligible] to rush right out there and say, "The White House regrets -

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

President: -- the arrests."

Ehrlichman: Sure.

Haldeman: They didn't have any --

Ehrlichman: Sure.

Haldeman: -- they've been grinding on Ron by the hour on the demonstrations.

Ehrlichman: On that line [unintelligible].

Haldeman: [Unintelligible].

President: He's never, he's never, they've never, they never see through [unintelligible].

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Conv. No. 494-4#6 (cont.)

Ehrlichman: The line that I think Ron should be pushing background-wise is Severeid's line, which is a superb --

Haldeman: Yeah.

Ehrlichman: -- argument --

President: Which is?

Ehrlichman: -- which is, these people that are hollering about the, the denial of justice are the very people who wanted to break the whole justice system by shutting this town down. The people who are crying about the lack of health facilities are the people who wanted to break down our whole health delivery system by blocking the hospitals and frustrating ambulances and shutting down the system. The people that are decrying --.

President: Why do you think Severeid did that?

Ehrlichman: I, I think he's just fed up.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: I think he's fed up with it.

Haldeman: Do you think he meant it?

Ehrlichman: Yup, I think he did.

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President: Do you?

Haldeman: Yeah, I think Severeid --.

President: What, what happened to him though? [Unintelligible]. Severeid isn't the brightest guy in the world. He gives the impression of depth and the rest. That's a pose.

Haldeman: He's, he's kind of emotional. I think he --

President: Think he is? Oh, you think he is?

Haldeman: -- gets emotional.

Ehrlichman: Yup. [Unintelligible] and he lives here.

President: Does he?

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

Haldeman: He's probably --

Ehrlichman: He was --

Haldeman: -- his car probably got stopped.

Ehrlichman: -- he was talking like uh, uh, uh, Burger.

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Haldeman: I think that's it.

President: You know, the thing that was very interesting, John, today even talking to these people I, of course, knew that the police had handled themselves well. Commander of the troops, uh, [unintelligible] three-star, two-star guy.

Haldeman: Yup.

President: And not that the National Guard guy who's kind of a clown --.

Haldeman: Yup.

President: Why we had 'em [unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: Uh, it's for politics.

President: I know, I know.

Ehrlichman: It's, it's essential.

President: I know that we had to, but anyway, the commander of troops, the two-star guy's quite impressive. And he said, you know, uh, he was, he said that, you know, "You didn't use many of these fellows. We brought in ten thousand." He said it cost two million dollars.

Ehrlichman: Wow.

President: [Unintelligible] transport.

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Ehrlichman: Yup.

President: [Unintelligible] to transport them --

Haldeman: Yup.

President: -- in. An-and incidentally, no, no, [unintelligible] a million dollars to transport them in and a million dollar and the, the overtime costs, uh, I don't know.

Ehrlichman: [Unintelligible] came in to see me.

President: About two million bucks already been spent [unintelligible] --

Ehrlichman: [Clears throat]

President: -- but he said, "What was really [unintelligible] these people who have been wondering about, how these people would act, and, be put to a test." And he said, "Their discipline was superb. They were [unintelligible]." He says they were talking they, they were having to deal with people of their own kind --

Ehrlichman: Yup.

President: -- of their own age, and, uh, they, they just did the right thing. And, uh, [unintelligible] said he said, "Our people did, too." I mean, 'n' I said, "You have a lot of blacks in your police force?" He said, "Yeah." I said, "How were they?" He said, "Just the same." [Unintelligible] the blacks [unintelligible].

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Ehrlichman: Yeah, there, there was a columnist --.

President: Is it true, is it true?

Ehrlichman: Yes, and th-, there was a columnist that made a very interesting point on that. He said that, that the people trying to tear down the system here were the, were the sons and daughters of affluent, middle-class homes, resisted by --

Haldeman: Yeah.

Ehrlichman: -- the sons in the, in the majority black --

President: Yeah.

Ehrlichman: -- of poverty-level homes.

President: That's right. That's right. Well --.

Ehrlichman: He said, "Isn't that a --

Haldeman: [Unintelligible] says [unintelligible] --.

Ehrlichman: -- isn't that a --."

President: Led, led, led by the Chief of Police --

Ehrlichman: Who's a --

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President: -- lower-middle class.

Ehrlichman: -- fourteen year old dropout. Yeah.

President: Lower-middle class.

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

President: Let's face it --

Ehrlichman: Yup.

President: -- that's the worst thing --

Ehrlichman: But --.

President: -- you can say about anybody --

Ehrlichman: The juxtaposition --

President: -- lower-middle class.

Ehrlichman: -- the juxtaposition --

President: Yeah.

Ehrlichman: -- in terms of who is defending the establishment is very interesting.

President: What's interesting is the blacks against the Jews, too.

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Ehrlichman: Basically --.

President: Half of those --

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

President: -- people are Jews. At least, at least.

Ehrlichman: The blacks and the southern whites --

President: Yup.

Ehrlichman: -- 'cause that's the --

President: Blacks and southern whites.

Ehrlichman: -- other half of the police department.

President: Standing up against the Jews --

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

President: -- and the northern liberals.

Haldeman: The military troops, or a good chunk of them --

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

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Haldeman: -- are black.

Ehrlichman: Yeah, yeah, well --.

President: Most of them're draftees, you know, and these guys who don't have a way to stay out of the service, and didn't teach or didn't --

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

President: -- do all those goddamn things that people did. Well, anyway, you background, you think they really are, they don't know what the hell to do with it?

Ehrlichman: I think they are, I think they are really frustrated by this whole turn of events, and they, and they really don't know which way to turn. They're turned off, as Oberdorfer was in this column he ran yesterday, by the, the fact that, uh, we wouldn't pander and, uh, I saw him and I just took, you know, the standard line on him and, uh --.

President: That we wouldn't pander what [unintelligible] --

Ehrlichman: Well, we wouldn't say that we --

President: -- we are sorry as hell.

Ehrlichman: -- we were sorry, or that it was dreadful that there was a constitutional breakdown --

President: Oh, sure.

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Ehrlichman: -- or that there was a lack of, uh, you know, adherence to constitutional principles [unintelligible].

President: Let me tell you why I did this thing yes-, here this morning. And I'm only sorry I didn't do it yesterday, but we couldn't work it in, but the reason that it's just as well, had so much in the news [unintelligible] be done, because there must be no question of pandering, there must be no question on backing these people up. Now they're going to have all sorts of lawsuits and there are people are going to squeal --

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

President: -- about the rest, but let these bastards from the other side get out on the other side. The country does not want these [unintelligible]. Nobody was hurt, seriously. Nobody was, uh, uh, uh, uh, s-, and, you know, there's a right to protest. Do you realize, I, do people also know it's like religion? The freedom of religion means the right to have none.

Ehrlichman: Um-hum.

President: And freedom of protest means the right not to protest. Now, God damn it, there were a lot of people who didn't want to protest. They wanted to go to work.

Ehrlichman: Yup.

President: They had to be protected in that right --

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Ehrlichman: Yeah.

President: -- just as much as the people --

Ehrlichman: That's right.

President: -- had to be protected in the right to protest.

Ehrlichman: Well, we've been pushing that very, very hard.

President: And it's really --

Ehrlichman: And, uh --

President: -- really --.

Ehrlichman: -- I think that --.

President: Across the country a lot of cops [unintelligible], well, John, you know, what, what indicates to me, I know Ziegler is very much opposed to doing this because he's taking so much heat from these bastards. I understand that.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible] though.

President: I know, but I understand why he would. He's there and he's there in, uh, the eye of the hurricane, but the point is, you know, you forget. Remember the time at the Chicago convention, John? We all, I thought, "Jesus Christ, let's all go in," and everybody thought you could go in and kick Daley. When I walked right through that parade and we went into Chicago --

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Ehrlichman: [Laughs]

President: -- I didn't say a word against Daley.

Ehrlichman: Yup.

President: They're for him.

Ehrlichman: Yup.

President: And the people that come here.

Ehrlichman: Well, that's it.

President: That was a vicious thing.

Ehrlichman: Yup.

President: His police were too tough.

Ehrlichman: Yup.

President: They knocked those bloody bastards around. Of course, those kids were bad, too.

Ehrlichman: Well, uh --.

Haldeman: They were led by the same people these kids were.

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Ehrlichman: That's right.

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: Abbie Hoffman --

President: Unintelligible].

Haldeman: -- Rennie Davis, John Froins.

President: They threw, you know, they threw shit out the windows --

Ehrlichman: Well, that was goin' on here.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible] did here too.

President: -- didn't they?

Ehrlichman: Yes, sir, absolutely.

President: It's a wonder that didn't get out.

Ehrlichman: Well, I tried to, I --

Haldeman: It's starting to get out.

Ehrlichman: -- I tried to load some of that into these stories, uh --

President: Did you really?

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Ehrlichman: -- and I guess some of it got in. I notice some of it in the newssummary and, and, uh, uh, uh --.

President: -- but they, uh, they did it, they did all this filthy [unintelligible]. Of course, I know that one of the worst things was the way they took paint --

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

President: -- smeared --.

Haldeman: Screwed up the DAR Hall.

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

President: That was horrible.

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

President: And it's just what you see in Mexico.

Haldeman: Called them lesbians.

President: Or worse.

Ehrlichman: Well --

President: I'm glad [unintelligible].

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Ehrlichman: -- I think the columnists are going to write it their way. They're going to slant it against us. They're going to say the White House was --

President: Yeah.

Ehrlichman: -- is terribly unsympathetic to the plight of these innocent people --

President: Sure.

Ehrlichman: -- that were arrested, and that's going to pay off in the long haul because the guy out in the country is goin' to read that and say, "Good," that they should be, they sh-, you know, they shouldn't let those bastards out and, and, uh --

President: Well, I feel --.

Ehrlichman: -- I think we're going to net out in the long haul.

President: There isn't going to be any. I don't give a damn what the country thinks of it. There's not goin' to be any toleration. We know what they were up to. These people were not peaceful. They didn't intend to be. Those people that said, "Oh, we were just running around looking at cherry blossoms." Hell, the cherry blossoms been gone for two weeks.

Ehrlichman: [Laughs]

President: They weren't looking at cherry blossoms.

Ehrlichman: No.

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President: They were looking for trouble.

Ehrlichman: There wasn't a guilty man in that whole jail.

President: No.

Ehrlichman: There's nobody in there that --.

President: No sir.

Haldeman: Your story about the lady behind you that --

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- [unintelligible].

President: Yeah. [Unintelligible].

Haldeman: What's that?

President: [Unintelligible]. That's the, uh --.

Ehrlichman: We'll, uh, take a lot of local heat on this from the local press and from the, uh, from basically the eastern axis press.

President: I don't give one damn [unintelligible].

Haldeman: I'm not so sure you're going to take as much heat as you think from them.

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

Conv. No. 494-4#6 (cont.)

Ehrlichman: Well, the Congress stepped up to this. The House stepped up to this beautifully.

Unknown: [Unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: They just get, gave --

Haldeman: [Unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: -- Bella Abzug hell up there --

President: How, how, how, how'd they do it? For the --.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: -- on the floor of the Senate. Edith Green stood up and made [unintelligible].

President: I called her up.

Ehrlichman: [Unintelligible]. Oh, did ya? They, uh, they really rallied around, and I suspect Jerry and some of 'em, you know, stimulated them. And, uh --.

President: [Unintelligible] he's one of those southerners. Edith Green.

Haldeman: Well, even Carl Albert moved to arrest them.

President: What did Albert, did he do something?

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Conv. No. 494-4#6 (cont.)

Haldeman: He had 'em arrested.

President: What?

Ehrlichman: Well, he, he didn't have any choice.

President: [Unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: He had a naked man standing on the Senate steps.

President: Looking at the Senate, though, looking at the Senate, though, what the hell did the Senate do?

Ehrlichman: I don't think they did anything on the floor. They did it, uh, the speeches out and around. Uh, let me think. I don't think so. They haven't been meeting, you know. They, they've just been meeting to adjourn. They haven't had any business, so, uh --.

President: That's the reason [unintelligible]. [Pause; room noise] Well --. [Pause; room noise]

Ehrlichman: Uh, we, uh, that, that troops business. Did he say how many they actually used? I, I had the impression they used, uh, six thousand of the ten that they had.

President: Oh, well, I thought they [unintelligible] brought up ten thousand.

Ehrlichman: I think so, but one, the high point I think we had six thousand committed to positions around here. But, uh --.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

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Conv. No. 494-4#6 (cont.)

Haldeman: Uh, here's your poll on the demonstrations. You, were the demon-, "Have you seen or heard about the demonstrations against the war in Washington this week?"
[Clears throat] We asked this on Thursday of the de-, of the veterans' week, the week the veterans were demonstrating.

President: Yeah.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

Transcript #7: Part of a conversation among President Nixon, John D. Ehrlichman, and H. R. Haldeman in the Oval Office between 12:00 pm and 12:42 pm on May 8, 1971.

Conversation No. 494-4#7

Haldeman: Uh, awareness that week was seventy-seven; unaware, twenty-three.

President: Um-hum.

Haldeman: And this week awareness, ninety-three; unaware, six.

President: Um-hum.

Haldeman: So there wasn't any question of awareness.

President: [To unknown person] Coffee.

Haldeman: Then, uh, approval, uh, "In general do you approve or disapprove of these demonstrations?" During the veterans' demonstration it was thirty-two approve; forty-two disapprove; twenty-six didn't know.

President: Thirty-two what?

Haldeman: Thirty-two approved; forty-two disapproved; twenty-six don't know. And we asked the same question right after the press conference on May first, after the April twenty-ninth press conference. [Unintelligible] had been, uh, the day of the, Saturday and Sunday of the demonstration.

Ehrlichman: [Unintelligible].

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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

Haldeman: At that time thirty approved; sixty-four disapproved.

Ehrlichman: Um-hum.

President: Gone up.

Haldeman: Disapproved went way up.

President: Umm.

Haldeman: The "approved" stayed about the same.

President: Um-hum.

Haldeman: This was the veterans and then at the end of the veterans' week with the, uh, [unintelligible].

President: Well, also I had a chance to hit it in the press conference.

Haldeman: You did.

Ehrlichman: But all of it, uh, practically all of it "don't knows" moved to "disapprove."

Haldeman: Plus --

Ehrlichman: Hmm.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log

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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

Haldeman: -- oh, yeah, oh. That's right. That's exactly what happened. All the "don't knows" moved to "disapprove."

Ehrlichman: Hmm.

Haldeman: "[Unintelligible] last night do you approve or disapprove?"

President: And the night before?

Haldeman: And the night before it was eighteen approve, seventy-one disapprove.

President: Umm.

Haldeman: Eleven don't know.

President: Now give the veterans' figure again. I just want to compare with [unintelligible].

Haldeman: [Unintelligible]. The veterans' figure was thirty-two/forty-two. This one's eighteen/seventy-one.

President: Oh, I got, turned it. Just turned it.

Haldeman: Okay. Then we said, "Do you approve or disapprove of the way the Washington Police handled the demonstrators?" Just a straight-on unloaded question: approve, fifty-six; disapprove, eighteen; no opinion, twenty-six.

President: Umm. [Unintelligible] didn't know.

Haldeman: Yeah. Approval is still three to one.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF**Tape Subject Log**
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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

President: So, it's fantastic.

Haldeman: "Do you feel the police were or were not justified in making mass arrests of the demonstrators who threatened to stop the Government by blocking traffic into Washington, DC?" Justified, seventy-six; not justified, ten.

Ehrlichman: Holy smoke!

Haldeman: "Do you think the Washington Police used too much force in handling the demonstrators, about the right amount, or were the police too easy on the demonstrators:" Too much force, eleven; about right, forty; too easy, twenty-three.

Ehrlichman: [Laughs]

Haldeman: And no opinion, twenty-six.

President: Yeah, that's good.

Ehrlichman: Uh.

Haldeman: And then we asked the [unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: Umm. [Unintelligible]. [Pause; room noise] Mass arrests justified: seventy-six to ten.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

- President: Yeah. Well, you can tell Ron that, so he won't worry so much about [unintelligible].
- Haldeman: Get it over. No question of the, uh, of whether you got any problem there.
- President: Of course you hit [unintelligible].
- Haldeman: Well, what the media has [unintelligible] --.
- President: [Unintelligible] Bob, you didn't get any question though, as to whether they, what the President's attitude [unintelligible], did you? Whether he, uh, approved.
- Haldeman: They didn't.
- President: You can't tell whether they're aware of the fact that the President approved what the police are, were doing. That's the thing, John, that I can see.
- Ehrlichman: Well, I don't think there's much room for, for worrying [unintelligible].
- President: Well, among intelligent [unintelligible] people.
- Ehrlichman: No, even, even, uh, the far right because even the, even the media that are criticizing the harshness are linking you with this.
- President: Good.
- Ehrlichman: So I, I think that's a plus. [Pause] Hmm.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

President: Those numbers are --.

Ehrlichman: Seventy-six to ten. Wow!

Haldeman: With ninety-three percent awareness.

President: Now, this "approve" or "disapprove" of demonstrations, let's come again. What's it said on that?

Haldeman: Eighteen/seventy-one.

President: Eighteen to seventy-one. [Unintelligible].

Haldeman: That's not bad.

President: [Unintelligible].

Haldeman: Thirty-two/forty-two on the [unintelligible] thing.

President: You know what I think [unintelligible].

Haldeman: I don't either.

Ehrlichman: Um-hum, um-hum.

Haldeman: I think, I think it's a goddamn good thing to know.

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

President: Oh boy, don't look it up, and don't, don't, and don't let it get out to our, uh, even our own Congressmen or friends. Just keep it right in our hats. The reason is that we want [unintelligible] to sucker these people [unintelligible] --.

Haldeman: Well [unintelligible] --

Ehrlichman: That'll scare 'em right across the line.

Haldeman: -- [unintelligible] of this polling --

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- it's not, it's, it's just for our own knowledge.

President: That's right. This is good knowledge. Well, I thought that -- but, you ought to get it to Ziegler so that he doesn't feel that --.

Haldeman: Yup. Not to use but just for his own --

President: Sure.

Haldeman: -- background.

President: 'Cause these, these left-wing press people, they'll love [unintelligible] his teeth today, and I hope to Christ they do.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

Haldeman: Yup. We asked an open-end question, "Anything you'd like to comment on, on these antiwar demonstrations and the, the --

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- answers will take a while to get those. It will be interesting how these sound. You know those are [unintelligible].

President: [Unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: [Unintelligible] they said they'd be back later in the summer.

President: Just say nothing.

Ehrlichman: And, uh, that's right. I think we should have a posture of, of, uh, just business as usual; no extraordinary preparations, and so forth.

President: [Unintelligible] more trouble getting their people together next time, too. Summertime, don't you think so?

Ehrlichman: Yup. Nobody's been back to Chicago to demonstrate since the Democratic National Convention. [Unintelligible] basically don't like to be busted, there's no question about that.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: No, sir, they do not, in spite of the brave front and the fellowship in the jail cell and all that stuff. They are essentially middle class, and they don't like to be arrested. And I think they --.

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Tape Subject Log
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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

President: You don't think you, think they don't like it on their records, too?

Ehrlichman: That's right. That's right. 'Cause there's sort of a --

President: They all know that down the road sometime they're going to have to go to work.

Ehrlichman: 'S it. This, well, and it's just that, it's just the sort of a, a middle-class ethic. It's a, a stigma kind of a thing. You're arrested; you're put in a jail cell with a common criminal. They consider themselves idealists. And I really think that the arrest thing gets to 'em.

President: Good.

Ehrlichman: That's why so many of 'em went home.

President: I know the fingerprinting did it.

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

President: [Unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: Well, it's a very interesting --.

President: Message got across finally. [Unintelligible]. Just keep this right in your hat. Good thing to know.

Ehrlichman: [Unintelligible] Journal had a hell of a fine editorial --

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Tape Subject Log
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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

President: I saw it.

Ehrlichman: -- yesterday.

President: [Unintelligible], isn't it? News summary.

Ehrlichman: News summary, yeah.

President: What does the *Wall Street Journal* know?

Ehrlichman: [Laughs] Well, that's all right.

President: [Unintelligible], that's about all.

Ehrlichman: Keeps the business --

President: [Unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: -- people in line.

President: [Unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: [Unintelligible] extraordinary considering the hammering away that the media did. Course the media had just enough of the tragedy and the abuse of civilians and that kind of thing, it --

Haldeman: They made a point of it.

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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

Ehrlichman: -- it offended them.

President: Finally got through.

Ehrlichman: Yup.

President: Finally got through. Do you think it hit, that they had enough of it, that it did offend people?

Ehrlichman: Must've, must've. The, despite, uh, these th-, and, uh, I think the media may have overplayed their hand. You know that interview, uh, where that conversation between a hippie and, uh, and the, uh, veteran of two wars? Did you happen to see that, where they, they had a, obviously had a camera behind each one of them? And, uh, the kid was saying, oh, uh, "What's wrong with, uh, stopping traffic and so on? Is that, is that, isn't that better than dropping napalm on people in Vietnam?" And this guy is sayin', "Look, sonny, I fought two world wars so that you'd have the freedom to go to school and grow up in a free country," and, and back and forth and then these, these scraggly guys were saying, "Yeah, we fought in Vietnam, too," and rah, rah, rah, rah, you know, and giving him a hard time. And I think that kind of thing really turns people off. Here's a guy just walkin' down the street, and he's confronted by these guys.

President: Decent guy.

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible] the folks sitting at home, most of them, are guys who fought in the world war themselves --

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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- or [unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

Haldeman: And they were, they --.

Ehrlichman: [Unintelligible] are really offended by this kind of thing.

President: Is McGovern a veteran?

Ehrlichman: Yup. He was in the Eighth Air Force.

President: In World War II.

Ehrlichman: Um-hum. Yeah, he's made quite a bit of the fact that he had a, he had a reunion of his crew, of his bomber crew and, uh, [unintelligible] soldier [unintelligible] sort of thing, you know.

President: Yeah, well, he's [unintelligible]. Well, one thing you've got to do is push the Kennedy tie-in to this thing. Push it, uh, I think you could be, make a note to have Colson get that, they ought to get out Kennedy's thing, a whole list of Democratic candidates and so forth and so on. His, his, his courageous support of the demonstrators, Kennedy's courageous support of the demonstrators should be widely distributed, widely distributed to every editor in the country and should be distributed to other people, you know, State chairmen and so forth.

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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

[Unintelligible] widely distributed. That's a damn good one. [Unintelligible] I just want to --.

Ehrlichman: Sure.

President: [Unintelligible] Muskie have anything? What's he saying?

Ehrlichman: No, he deplored it.

Haldeman: Muskie [unintelligible] he deplored it in sort of wishy washy --

Ehrlichman: Very moderate.

Haldeman: -- so he made --.

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

President: So why don't we just, uh, just, well, then, just, just, just get, get the whole thing out, how all the Democratic -- Humphrey, what did he say? I'd say Humphrey, Muskie, and Teddy how they all, uh, lump them all together how they all supported the demonstration, period. And the people [unintelligible] separate the two, John. Not now, even if they do --.

Ehrlichman: No, not at this point.

President: It's all one. It's all blurred.

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

Haldeman: [Unintelligible] the beauty of the other, the bad one, having come after the veterans. It --.

Ehrlichman: Teddy you could push; you can push McCloskey.

Haldeman: Well, let's don't do that because, see, we didn't differentiate, we didn't say that the veterans, the demonstrators, just the vet-, the demonstrations.

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

Haldeman: Do you agree --

Ehrlichman: Right.

Haldeman: -- with these demonstrations?

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

Haldeman: And then that a couple weeks ago there was only a ten percent spread between approval and disapproval. Now there's a, a fifty-three percent spread.

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

President: [Unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: That's black and white.

President: Also, the fact that it went on so long, we probably began to get to people.

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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

Ehrlichman: Um-hum. Well, that's what we thought would happen.

Haldeman: That, that, the-, they'd be, they'd gain some sympathy with the veterans' thing, which they did.

President: Um-hum.

Haldeman: Only forty-two disapproving. That's pretty low.

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: That's the closest to an approval we've ever had --

Ehrlichman: Um-hum.

Haldeman: -- on a demonstration and we, we felt that when we were lookin' at it that we had a problem with it, even with the ratty-looking guys. [Unintelligible] obey were ratty-looking guys because they kept --

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- they identified with the rest of the people --

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- as the time went on.

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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

Ehrlichman: It's funny what runs through their minds. I don't understand that. If Kerry and three hundred of those guys had dressed themselves up --.

Haldeman: Kerry looked pretty good. He was --.

Ehrlichman: Oh, yeah, but even he made concessions to the thing --

Haldeman: He wore his fatigues.

Ehrlichman: -- fatigues and all that sort of stuff. But if they had, if they had come in straight --

President: That's right.

Haldeman: See, he couldn't wear his uniform.

Ehrlichman: He wouldn't have to.

Haldeman: But he needed, he needed some, he needed to get his medals out [unintelligible].

President: Or his ribbons [unintelligible].

Haldeman: So he wore his fatigues in order to get his medal [unintelligible].

President: [Unintelligible] even these last, the demonstrators generally should just look like, they should come in looking clean and wearing ties.

Haldeman: God, if they got a bunch of those in wearing neckties and decent haircuts marching down the streets, they'd knock this country over.

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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

Ehrlichman: Yup.

President: They sure would.

Ehrlichman: Yup.

President: They sure would. Don't tell 'em; say, "Please."

Ehrlichman: [Laughs]

President: Well then.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible]. If they've got a combination of that and some hardhats --

President: Yup.

Haldeman: -- [unintelligible] marching down here, they could turn this thing to, to sixty --

President: Yup.

Haldeman: -- percent approval.

President: 'S right.

Ehrlichman: But there's a sort of a lowest common denominator phenomenon that works in these things.

Haldeman: Yup.

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Conv. No. 494-4#7 (cont.)

President: Yup. They get down to --.

Haldeman: People in neckties and decent haircuts won't come out and march in the streets. Even McIntyre can't get 'em out to win the war.

Ehrlichman: Yeah, but, but these guys could cut their hair. You, of course that would violate everything that they stand for in terms of, uh --

President: They're against all that [unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: -- being, uh, yes, symbolizing a departure from the system. [Unintelligible].

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log
(rev. 10/06)

Conv. No. 494-4#8 (cont.)

Transcript #8: Part of a conversation among President Nixon, John D. Ehrlichman, and H. R. Haldeman in the Oval Office between 12:00 pm and 12:42 pm on May 8, 1971.

Conversation No. 494-4#8

Ehrlichman: Is that typical, Bob, during this, the shift of sentiment [from "don't know" to "approve" or "disapprove."]?

Haldeman: No, it's typical during the period of, of, uh, something like Calley. During the Calley period the "don't know" went way up. Demonstrations, because of them being on night after night, they kick the "don't know" way up.

President: [Unintelligible].

Haldeman: It's, uh, it's during a period of, of when something's happening that it doesn't form a trend.

President: Well, I think that --

Haldeman: With Calley --

President: -- I think the [unintelligible].

Haldeman: -- "don't know" went up, right afterwards went back where it was.

President: I think this poll, Bob, would indicate that my intuition was correct to not drop, that, I have not identified strongly enough with law-and- order issues here.

Ehrlichman: Umm.

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Conv. No. 494-4#8 (cont.)

President: See my point? You're always gonna benefit, John, for identifying with a winning cause, and, uh, I just don't think we're identified. I mean, uh, Ron's had to dance around [unintelligible]. We've never said we regretted it, but I don't know if it's gotten through.

Ehrlichman: Jeez, we, we came down pretty hard in these backgrounders --

President: Well, I think --

Ehrlichman: -- that you considered it --

President: -- the backgrounders are one thing, but I --.

Ehrlichman: -- you considered it appropriate, you considered it, uh --

President: Yeah.

Ehrlichman: -- a highly satisfactory performance --

President: Right.

Ehrlichman: -- by the police and, and, uh, that's the way these guys are carrying it but of course they're carrying it as criticism.

President: Hmm. Well, in any event --.

Ehrlichman: [Unintelligible] said that, uh, it was ob-obviously, uh, pragmatic politics --

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Conv. No. 494-4#8 (cont.)

President: Yeah, I know.

Ehrlichman: -- that forced us to do that.

Haldeman: Pierpoint is a strange, he's, he's on an odd kick [unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: He's very emotional on this. Very emotional.

President: Why?

Ehrlichman: I don't know. I was thinking I might have him up for just a visit on it.

President: Yeah, it'd be worth it.

Haldeman: It'd be interesting just to say, "Why are you so uptight --

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- about this sort --

Ehrlichman: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- of thing [unintelligible] "

Ehrlichman: I'll do that.

President: Probably concerned about Nazism.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

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Conv. No. 494-4#8 (cont.)

- Ehrlichman: Well, you know, it may be some, some hidden thing. He may have had a nephew in this thing or some friend --
- President: [Unintelligible].
- Ehrlichman: -- of his may have been jugged or something and, and, uh, I'll, I'll get him in, find out.
- President: [Unintelligible], it's, uh, it's certainly a, a good thing at this point, I mean, it's just about where's it's been, isn't it?
- Haldeman: Yup. The spread --
- President: [Unintelligible].
- Haldeman: -- is exactly the same. It's nineteen --
- President: Fifty/thirty-one.
- Haldeman: -- twenty, nineteen/twenty spread. Fifty/thirty-one or fifty-three/thirty-four. It's, what's happened is some people from both the "approve" or "disapprove" have moved to the "don't know."
- President: [Unintelligible] suppose a part of it may be when they see a lot of disturbance, that sort of breaks down --
- Haldeman: Any --

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Conv. No. 494-4#8 (cont.)

President: -- shakes their confidence.

Haldeman: -- any, anything does.

Ehrlichman: Um-hum.

President: Like the Calley thing.

Ehrlichman: Um-hum.

President: But on the other hand, I think Connally has a point, John. I think he's right. He thinks that you gotta demagogue more, he said, you gotta get out and, uh, I mean, they're gotta know that the President is a strong leader that he, by God, stepping up to this himself. You see, the point is --.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible] at the time of the Calley thing the "don't know" went up to twenty-three.

President: [Unintelligible].

Haldeman: Way up.

President: [Unintelligible] change though, was when I said something, you understand?

Haldeman: Yeah.

President: That's my point [unintelligible].

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Conv. No. 494-4#8 (cont.)

Haldeman: [Unintelligible].

President: We, I've not had an opportunity to say anything on it. I mean, since --

Ehrlichman: Um-hum.

President: -- since the press conference.

Ehrlichman: Um-hum.

President: See, I haven't said anything since the demonstrations began, [unintelligible] just sort of leaked out, through, you know, through --.

Haldeman: And the next time the "don't know" went up, went up to sixteen at the time of the, uh, veterans' demonstration. Then went right back down to the thirteen where it usually is, right afterwards. Now, it's back up again to nineteen.

President: Very interesting. But there again, there again, uh, but don't we have, don't we miss an opportunity by not --

Haldeman: [Unintelligible] we --.

President: -- when we get, uh, you gotta remember, people are, uh, people tend to identify very directly emotionally with, with, with leadership, that they, they don't, they don't see all these subtleties that we see. Sure, they, sure everybody knows that President [unintelligible], everybody knows he supports him [unintelligible]. Not unless you, uh, not unless you get out there and, uh, some way they gotta see it.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

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Conv. No. 494-4#8 (cont.)

Ehrlichman: Gotta personify it.

President: You've gotta personify it. You've gotta say it. You've gotta, you've gotta see the guy right out there, uh, frankly, on camera.

Haldeman: Um-hum.

President: He's gotta say, "I support these things."

Ehrlichman: [Unintelligible] time we have one of these. Why, we put you in a sidecar --

President: Sure.

Haldeman: [Laughs]

Ehrlichman: -- with a blue helmet on and uh --.

President: Well, you know, it's no accident. Reagan ran around to all these things --

Ehrlichman: That's right.

President: -- and it helped him, no question at all. He identified as the guy who was leading the charge against the bad guys, and we have not done that. I mean, that's the thing that, uh, it's the thing Ziegler does not really understand. Uh, basically, uh, Ziegler, our whole group of PR people are always trying to avoid, you know, uh, uh, irritating too much the, you know, the [unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: And, uh, you sh-, you should see them react when you say, ALook, nobody has a constitutional right not to be arrested."

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Conv. No. 494-4#8 (cont.)

President: Ha [breath intake] [unintelligible].

Ehrlichman: Oh, just, just offended. They're, "You mean to say." That's right. No place in the Constitution says you're free from being arrested. That just, just drives 'em up the wall. [Unintelligible] very curious working concept of civil rights.

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Conv. No. 494-4#9 (cont.)

Transcript #9: Part of a conversation between President Nixon and H. R. Haldeman in the Oval Office between 12:42 pm and 1:12 pm on May 8, 1971.

Conversation No. 494-4#9

President: What about you, what is your feeling, though, don't you, don't you see, don't you think that I, uh, I'm right when I say we may, we may not have exploited this enough? Identifying with the police.

Haldeman: No, I don't think so. I think [unintelligible], I think it's, it's absolutely clear [unintelligible] the way they're talking and the criticism is, is, which also helps. 'N' the criticism is also directed here. [Unintelligible] all this stuff.

President: [Unintelligible] right under our hats. Incidentally, I wouldn't tip it to anybody, I wouldn't give it out to, uh, any of our own people, to Colson. [Unintelligible] just as well to [unintelligible].

Haldeman: Got the means to stop [unintelligible] --.

President: Well, what I meant on this --.

Haldeman: I filled out the question now and then for a purpose [unintelligible].

President: [Unintelligible] it wouldn't be, for the reason that I didn't want [unintelligible] how really much --.

Haldeman: Yeah.

President: -- people're turned off these things.

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Conv. No. 494-4#9 (cont.)

- Haldeman: Yeah. [Unintelligible] again the >knowledge is power= question. Knowing this gives you a hell of a lot of --.
- President: Give these things again, how was it again, these, uh, the, the, that rundown on, on the Congressional numbers.
- Haldeman: Well, approval was thirty-two, during the veterans, approval thirty-two/forty-two.
- President: Okay.
- Haldeman: Then right after the press conference --.
- President: [Unintelligible]. How, what did you ask there? What did you think of demonstrations? Same question?
- Haldeman: There we said, "A series of demonstrations against the Vietnam war is taking place in Washington. Do you approve or disapprove of --
- President: Yeah.
- Haldeman: -- these demonstrations?"
- President: What did it come out?
- Haldeman: Thirty/sixty-four.
- President: What?

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Conv. No. 494-4#9 (cont.)

Haldeman: Thirty/sixty-four.

President: Thirty/sixty-four. Okay.

Haldeman: Thirty-two/forty-two down to thirty/sixty-four.

President: Right.

Haldeman: And then --

President: See, the press conference solidified it hard.

Haldeman: -- [unintelligible] last week, this week it was eighteen/seventy-one.

President: Jesus Kee-rist, that's higher than it was last October, you realize that? And [unintelligible] October sixty-nine. Remember, that period sixty-five.

Haldeman: Yeah, sixty-eight. Sixty-eight [unintelligible].

President: This is a, a lower approval.

Haldeman: Yeah.

President: I mean, eighteen percent. This is --.

Haldeman: I think, I think it was twenty-one/sixty-eight.

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Conv. No. 494-4#9 (cont.)

President: [Unintelligible] turn people off. Now, [unintelligible].

Haldeman: And "Do you approve or disapprove of the way the police handled the demonstrators?" See, that's --

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- the straightest possible --

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- question we could ask.

President: That's right.

Haldeman: Fifty-six approve; eighteen disapprove.

President: Still only eighteen.

Haldeman: Twenty-six no opinion.

President: All right.

Haldeman: That's without giving them any guidance. Then we said, "Do you feel the police were or were not justified in making mass arrests of the demonstrators who threatened to stop the Government by blocking traffic into Washington, DC?"

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Conv. No. 494-4#9 (cont.)

President: Umm. That's a loaded question.

Haldeman: Well, but it's absolutely [unintelligible].

President: [Unintelligible] true.

Haldeman: Precisely what they did. Justified, seventy-six; not justified, ten. And, uh, "Do you think the Washington Police used too much force in handling the demonstrators, about the right amount, or were the police too easy?" Too much, eleven; about right, forty; too easy, twenty-three.

President: Sixty-three.

Haldeman: Sixty-three versus eleven.

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(rev. 10/06)

Transcript #10: Part of a conversation between President Nixon and H. R. Haldeman in the Oval Office between 12:42 pm and 1:12 pm on May 8, 1971.

Conversation No. 494-4#10

President: We are identified enough with this thing, Bob. It just may be that, uh, [unintelligible] this morning our chief --.

Haldeman: Yes.

President: Umm [unintelligible].

Haldeman: I, I think it was a very good thing we've done.

President: I made a strong statement. I'm shooting it to the press [unintelligible] and [unintelligible] all the people on their staffs that we appreciate it and so forth and so on.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible]. The "Nixon Praises Police" will look very big on the day of the thing, which is a good time for it to ride. In other words, before you knew, you weren't waiting to see what the results were, you were, you were praising 'em for the way they moved to handle it, to begin with.

President: That got a big, yeah.

Haldeman: That got a very big play. There hasn't been --.

President: Much this week.

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Conv. No. 494-4#10 (cont.)

Haldeman: -- a lot in between 'cause there hasn't been any direct statement out of here or any
--

President: No.

Haldeman: -- direct involvement.

President: You see, I've watched the news summaries and all it's been is that now and then, I mean, Ron just gets it a little bit rough. He gets lots of hammering in this thing so there isn't any, he doesn't give 'em any news, see?

Haldeman: That's right. He's avoided that.

President: That's right, that's right. He just said, "Well, the President isn't going to say anything about it except that he does not back, he does not regret."

Haldeman: Well, you know, he's [unintelligible] --

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- fully satisfied --

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- approves [unintelligible].

President: But they don't use it.

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Conv. No. 494-4#10 (cont.)

Haldeman: But they won't use that because that's not what they want. What they want is a "but he regrets that --

President: Yeah, that's right.

Haldeman: -- anybody's civil rights were --

President: That's right, that's right.

Haldeman: -- obstructed." So --.

President: And because I think they may know themselves that this, this [unintelligible] can help us.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible] so, you've got now this thing --.

President: Yeah, [unintelligible] get a little play tonight. It might, why not?

Haldeman: It would have been better to have been yesterday timing-wise, but you won't have gotten a play. You can get a better play out of it tonight.

President: Think so?

Haldeman: Yeah.

President: [Unintelligible].

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Conv. No. 494-4#10 (cont.)

- Haldeman: I think you will 'cause you had that with the unemployment and the farm business --
- President: Yeah.
- Haldeman: -- out here and all that stuff yesterday --
- President: Yeah.
- Haldeman: -- [unintelligible].
- President: And also it would not have been good to have tried to top the farm story. [Unintelligible] much as we, you know, the farm story, we had to play it out so we [unintelligible] --.
- Haldeman: Well, you would have gotten the negatives on it, whatever you did. You needed to [unintelligible] a positive on it.
- President: [Unintelligible] we could get it across is to say this. If you [unintelligible] this you could have Colson to have these Congress-, our good, loyal Congressmen and Senators, some of them commend the President. You know, I don't think they can get a letter or anything but --.
- Haldeman: They got a letter.
- President: They [unintelligible] good people [unintelligible] there are not enough around. They oughta commend --.
- Haldeman: [Unintelligible] basis for it [unintelligible] they --.

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Conv. No. 494-4#10 (cont.)

President: Some way they could identify, identify with the President. I don't know how to do it. [Unintelligible] say we [unintelligible]. Well, I'll tell you, these [unintelligible] those good figures, though, show you, by God, the people are, this country have still got a lot of guts.

Haldeman: Yeah.

President: We get this war moved, moved around, we can turn it [unintelligible], Bob, do you realize that? They're all on the wrong side of this issue. They really are. Now, when John says that a lot of them are really troubled and really are against us, they really are not.

Haldeman: They, they are against [unintelligible].

President: Against it for the wrong reason.

Haldeman: That's right.

President: They think it's hurting the antiwar cause.

Haldeman: That's right.

President: They would be for it if they thought it helped the antiwar cause.

Haldeman: That's exactly right.

President: By God, it's a hell of a thing. And, uh, I just want Colson to --.

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Conv. No. 494-4#10 (cont.)

Haldeman: They're against it for the same reason that Tunney's against it.

President: [Unintelligible] you, uh, [unintelligible] be that you ought to let, no. I don't think you oughta give Colson figures. He's like a [unintelligible].

Haldeman: He doesn't need 'em, I just [unintelligible] --

President: Doesn't need 'em. [Unintelligible].

Haldeman: -- [unintelligible] we're, we're on damn, solid ground here don't --.

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: You know, we'll just --

President: Right.

Haldeman: -- handle [unintelligible].

President: [Unintelligible] but that, I think that we should have a top priority [unintelligible] this thing.

Haldeman: Nobody knows we even polled this.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

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Conv. No. 494-4#10 (cont.)

President: Top priority, we should this, this, this business of identifying the President with, uh, standing by the police, Washington, and then I told Ziegler that, which he has not yet put out, that we just, we're gonna do the same thing if they, if anybody comes again. We're, we're just put people on warning that this town's gonna, the Government's gonna run. It's gonna be a peaceful and orderly city. [Unintelligible] find that over a period of time, Bob, we've picked up some accretion here on this issue, don't you think so? I mean, uh, [unintelligible] debate goes on.

Haldeman: It may be good for us.

President: I've got an idea. Is it, is it, is it worth, in this instance, is it worth, uh, uh, [unintelligible] maybe say something on this? The President deserves great credit for his --

Haldeman: Yeah.

President: -- firm leadership. Could he say that? I mean, I wonder if you'd call him and say that "I think it's very important to him." [Unintelligible] we know this is, this is a overwhelming majority of the people [unintelligible] leak to Mitchell. I mean, give Mitchell one, just one figure, you know what I mean? [Unintelligible] if he'd just say it, the, uh, [unintelligible] 'cause Agnew should be letting it pop. Now --.

Haldeman: No, no, 'fraid he won't do it right.

President: Well, [unintelligible].

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Conv. No. 494-4#10 (cont.)

Haldeman: [Unintelligible] should be done.

President: [Unintelligible].

Haldeman: [Unintelligible] hit the thing anyway.

President: Yeah. Why can't he do it in terms, though, of saying the, he, he just commends the President. We have a President who stands firm against disorderly conduct, you know, I mean, uh, against disruptive conduct. He kept the Government, he keeps the Government going and, uh, [unintelligible]. Get,uh, Buchanan's going to go off on his trip. Who the hell have we got around here can write that sort of thing now for Agnew? Let's see.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible] guys.

President: Safire? No.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible].

President: [Unintelligible].

Haldeman: He's got a lot of [unintelligible] some of his own guys. They get --

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- pretty much the same.

President: Would you, don't you think, did you think, uh, let's let Agnew. I don't think Agnew should hit the kids. Uh, uh, I mean, I mean, the --.

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Conv. No. 494-4#10 (cont.)

Haldeman: Already did.

President: Well, let me say --.

Haldeman: His usual stuff.

President: Yeah, [unintelligible]. What I want him to do, he's going to talk about it anyway.

Haldeman: Yeah.

President: Why doesn't he change his [unintelligible]?

Haldeman: Go to the positive side of it. Just that, how, he could be very positive about it: "a remarkable achievement and how this, this all ended up."

President: Got the backing of the President? [Pause] [Unintelligible] the President and so forth [unintelligible]. I think that's enough. There's Mitchell and, and then let, let Dole work a few of the, I mean, let, uh, Colson work a few Congressmen over. Uh, and, uh, [unintelligible] damn fool [unintelligible]. Do you know what they do, these Congressmen, [unintelligible] that damn [unintelligible] and all the rest, they just rush in there like hell.

Haldeman: That's right. Teddy must have this kind of information. I can't understand why he went the way he did.

President: Gotta beat, gotta beat Humphrey.

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Conv. No. 494-4#10 (cont.)

Haldeman: Well, now, unless he just thought he was --

President: Highest priority --

Haldeman: -- saying what they'd like to hear.

President: -- the highest priority Colson's got this week is to hang the Democrats with this. Tie 'em in with the demonstrators and tie me to the police. And, uh, let's try to do it both ways [unintelligible]. Incidentally, to take them on, you know. He could take on, uh, I think Agnew could take Teddy Kennedy on. [Unintelligible].

Haldeman: [Unintelligible] shocking speech [unintelligible] --

President: Yeah, his shocking speech.

Haldeman: -- hasn't been reported.

President: -- and then go on and again, as they say, let's see, let's take on, uh, take on Muskie for his support of the demonstration without naming his disavowal later.

Haldeman: Okay.

President: [Unintelligible] this week, don't you think? [Unintelligible] get a lot of, uh --

Haldeman: Yup, [unintelligible] do that.

President: -- [unintelligible] get a lot of reaction and so forth.

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Conv. No. 494-4#10 (cont.)

Haldeman: Post-speech and analysis [unintelligible].

President: [Unintelligible]. They'll think they're gonna make Agnew look bad by having him step up to this, [unintelligible] Agnew step up. I think Agnew and I, Mitchell's going to California to speak to the sheriffs anyway on Monday and Mitchell'll, you know, will hit it very hard on there. That he was, he worked with the President; the President worked with him, and he was completely supportive. The, we have a President that supported the Chief of Police. He supports him now and supported him at the, in, in the first instance, and he supports him now when he's under attack for enforcing the law. And he will support law enforcement officials when they enforce the law fairly, see? Somethin' like that; some, Mitchell could get that into a speech. It'd be helpful.