

Richard Nixon Presidential Library
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3	41	1/26/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Other Document	Record of a conversation between Colson and Al Sindlinger on subjects such as RN's polling numbers after the State of the Union address and the automotive industry. Handwritten notes added by unknown. 3 pgs.
3	41	1/27/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Other Document	Record of a conversation between Colson and Al Sindlinger RE: theoretical polling information generated based on RN's possible opponents in the 1972 election. Handwritten notes added by unknown. 5 pgs.

Converstion with Al Sindlinger, January 26, 1972



S: ..vote for us is over 50% now. Yea, it was down to 46 and I, ...the funny thing that I had before or after it ;didn't move.

C: In other words, you were running the Presidential popularity before and after the State of the Union ?

S: Yea, I ran it just before and after and I was going to stop it yesterday and then, of course, last night I decided to continue it.

C: And it wasn't moving beyond...

S: It didn't move after the State of the Union. I was surprised.

C: Today it went up to 50% ?

S: It's over 50 now, it could be 51 or 52. And I've got some other questions on...I thought I'd listen tonight and let things cool down for a couple days and then do a real study.

C: Well, you know what would be helpful, if you would throw in there "Do you think the President is really trying to get the war over.."

S: Well, I've got my standard questions here, "Do you think the President is doing all he can to end the war in Vietnam", that one's in. I used that even with Johnson, you know.

C: What does that normally come out with the President ?

S: Well, wait a minute. The one I have here, I've got a couple since this, but I can't put my hands on them. But the one here was made in, following the Nixon --- November 3, his Vietnam talk in 1969. The first two days following on November 4 and 5, we got a yes, 68.1. No of 17.5, and no opinion of 14.4. Then the four days following November 4 through the 7, the yes jumped to 72.1, the no was 15.7 and no opinion was 12.2 and then taking 8 days from November 4 -- what did he do on November 4 ?

C: November 3, 1969, was when he announced he wasn't going to surrender. The kids were out in the streets.

S: Then for the full 8 days, November 4 through 11, it was 79.2 yes, and 12.8 no, and 8.0 no opinion. I can't find it quickly, but I've had two since and if I remember, it ran down to around 50% yes and the current ones run at least

75 to 80.

C: After last night. I would think so. I would be amazed if it weren't over 80 because anybody...for one thing, we've just learned that it got us 64% rating, which means 64% of all TV sets in the United States were tuned into it.

S: Oh, I wouldn't be surprised at all, because I imagine all the people that read or heard about it...it's going to be astronomical.

C: Oh, yea, it's fantastic. But, what I'm interested in is your observation that it's raised his rating up over 50. I think that's really impressive.

S: And the no's are still 14, or 15 percent.

C: That's amazing. Okay, my friend, I'll be very eager to hear from you when you get something.

S: I thought I would wait until tomorrow. I wanted to listen tonight. I thought I'd wait until tomorrow and then do...

C: .. Democrat?

S: Yea.

C: Well, you'd feel a little bit without a place to turn to.

S: How would you advise them?

C: Well, you know what they're saying?

S: Oh yea, oh the hell with the advise.

C: Well, Humphrey has the classic statement of all time: He said, "Well, if this helps the President politically, it's just the price we'll have to pay". Isn't that wild. What a partisan son of a bitch. Well, Al, I appreciate it and if ...

S: Sometimes he's honest anyway.

C: Exactly. Well, if you'll inform me when you have some definite figures out of this..

S: I should have something by this time tomorrow.

C: Okay, and I'm working on setting up a meeting with Connally. I don't know why the hell my staff hasn't done it yet, but we'll have it.

S: The real sore spot in the election is the industrial mid-west. The steel and automotive areas.

C: Amazing because automobiles are going like gangbusters.

S: Well, you see what is happening to them and this is why I think you're not hearing any too much rubbles from labor right now, and I don't know whether you've thought about this...

C: They're all getting overtime.

S: Well, that's it.

C: Sure, there's nobody being hired. They're just all working 40...

S: See, the point I'm making is that in our response in the automotive areas over the, particularly, the last four or five years, when you had, when you asked the income question, only in those areas would people say, well, do you mean including my overtime or without my overtime? and it's perfectly clear to me that these automotive and steel workers, those two together and they're probably some Teamsters, but not many, but most of those specialties, have been living for the past 5 years on, not on their base pay but take-home overtime pay. And this is what they're feeling. ~~XXXXXX~~ But they're adjusting to it.

C: Well, that makes it a tough crunch because they're all getting fat and rich but the unemployed aren't getting hired.

S: That's right, but the amazing thing is they seem to be adjusting to it. Which is very very interesting.

C: Adjusting to it, you mean in the sense that they're adjusting to the fact that there's the unemployment.

S: They know there isn't going to be any overtime for a while. They've adjusted to the fact that their base pay is not going to be their pay for a while. You see, they talk in these plants. Don't underestimate the knowledge that the worker has of what the profits are. Don't ever underestimate that.

C: I don't for a minute. Well, very helpful my friend and I'll look forward to hearing from you as soon as some of these results are in.

S:

The first question is: On Tuesday evening over nationwide TV, President Nixon outlined an eight point plan to end the war in Vietnam. Have you read or heard about this or did you see ~~it~~ the President on TV ?

~~XX~~ The TV audience is going to be fantastic -- probably 70 or 80 million -- 70 million, probably ~ ~ and the knowledge is about 85-90% *maybe*

C: Jesus.

The second question is: Since President Nixon's TV announcement on Tuesday, have you had any conversations or discussions with anyone about the President's peace plan or what is being said about it by anyone ?

And the conversation on this will be over 65%.

C: uh-huh.

And the remarks at the end of the question are: If yes, what was discussed and it's running all over the place. The general agreement is about time -- he should have done it sooner -- he's pulled the rug out -- what will the Democrats do now -- the Democrats are befuddled -- He had to do it -- great, excellent -- about time -- things like that.

The next question is a repeat question I used some time ago and it is: President has three choices on the Vietnam problem: 1 is an extreme choice to admit defeat and give up. -- give the North Vietnamese whatever they want and get out to get our prisoners back. The other choice is to continue to do what he is doing and try to negotiate and the other extreme choice is to step up the war for a total victory -- go all out and win it. Now if you were the President of the United States or you were to advise the President on what to do -- would you tell him to give up - continue as he is -- or go all out and win?

I'd say that the give-up is around 20% or less -- the continue is going to be about 60 and 70% - and around 25-30% are hawks. ~~xxxgo all out~~

C: You mean --

S: Yep, go ~~o~~ all out -- and they are in the midwest and the unions -- hardhats

C: Is that right?

S: Yep. - these fellows they want to fight too

Next question is: Is President Nixon doing all he can to settle the war in Vietnam ?

And that is running very, very high.

C: Is that right?

S: Yes.

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The next ~~w~~ question is our standard question on -- if the next year's President

election

It's running about 52-53%

C: 52-53.

S: And the negatives are 14 -- 13-14%.

C: Isn't that marvelous, huh.

If the election were being held today, who would be your number one choice?

And what's interesting here, is that ~~x~~ what's his name in N. Y. is coming up --

C: Lindsay???

S: Lindsay's coming up for some unknown reason. But the rest of them are running about the same. Mills is dropped almost completely out..

C: Yep, but you are still getting Muskie number one?

S: Yeah, Muskie's number one. Kennedy is way down.

C: Is that right.

S: Yeah. ~~MX~~ It's Muskie, Humphrey, (Wallace is up pretty high)

And the next question is: Are you or any member of your household a member of a labor union?

And the last question is when you think of politics, do you think of yourself as a Democrat, Republican or Independent?

C: Gee, that will be fascinating -- fascinating. Now, when, Al will you be completed on that survey.

S: Well, I've got about 400 and I thought I ought to run it about 3 cycles -- God maybe four cycles -- and get at least 1500 or 2000.

C: You'd be going through that through the weekend and

S: yes

C: And then how early could you release it. You know, nobody has released a poll -- Frank Stanton called me from CBS -- very nice of him to call -- yesterday and he said "Chuck, do you know anybody doing any quick polls on the reaction to the Presidents thing?" and I said no,

garbled(?)

And he said, you know, we used to have a quick service here where we set up and could get instant reaction and have it the next night, he said, I wish to God we had it, because it would be a helluva ... spontaneous

S: You, didn't tell him we were doing it, did you?

C: No, I didn't because I didn't dare. I didn't know whether I should or not.

S: Yeah.

C: You know, I don't know whether to use you fellows or

S: If you talk... call him back and tell him I'm doing one.

C: Alright. But the point would be how fast could you get it?

S: Well, I think the thing is so important, I don't know whether I can release it early or hold it.

XX What do you think?;

C: Oh, the earlier you release it, the more newsworthy it will be.

S: Well, maybe I should release all of it tomorrow... what is today... Today's thursday, isn't it?

C: Well, if you ~~release it tomorrow~~ get it out tomorrow -- for the Sunday newspapers -- it would be a gangbuster.

S: Alright, let me release something tomorrow afternoon.

C: On these questions we just talked about.

S: Yeah.

C: Great.

S: I won't have any of the cross-tabs but I can have the key stuff.

C: Sure, I mean you could have the fact that those supporting the President's reelection rose from 40 to 53 --

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S: It was down to 44 -- it did go up slightly after the State of the Union it was 44 before and 46 after.

C: Well, it would be a helluva a good one to show that his popularity has risen and that now 80% feel he is doing all he can to end the war and 60-70 that

S;; Saturday morning would be a bad time... ?

C: Well, yeah, that's a bad time. You gotta get it out Friday afternoon with a Sunday a.m. press release time on it.

S: Yeah. That's what I'll do. ~~Then~~

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C: Then, you'll get a ~~m~~aximum bang out of it.

S: Alright, tell Stanton we're doing it.

C: I'll call Frank in the morning. Then call me when you have the confirmed results though.

S: Yeah, I'll give you something tomorrow.

C: Great. Thanks a million.

S: That's the way its running and its a very clean interview.

C: Well, its beautiful because its really giving us a feel, isn't it?

S: Well, these extreme questions -- you know I asked those questions before and at one point we were getting about 38% hawks and about 11% doves. Now I'd say its going to be about ... well, near 30% hawks and about maybe 18-19 doves.

C: But then the most in middle thing continue?

S: Yep.

C: fascinating.

S: I would say that from the tenor of the hawkishness -- that if he gets kicked around ... I think that you're gonna find that go up.

C: Yeah. I do too. You notice they didn't really turn us down today.

S: That is interesting, isn't it? Did you expect it?

C: I expected ~~that~~ they would turn us down and then come around back, but they hinting that they were flexible but we may have really flushed them out. We took a long gamble on it but we might have flushed them out.

S: Well, that ~~would~~ ^{is} interesting, if we did.

C: Well, if we ever pull it off, God, almighty.

S: That's right.

C: It would be marvelous, wouldn't it? Boy.

S: Yep.