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3	43	5/12/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Other Document	Record of a conversation between Colson and Lou Harris RE: fluctuating poll numbers and RN's lead over various Democratic candidates. 3 pgs.

Conversation with Lou Harris, May 12, 1972

H: ...I wanted to give you what's in my column.

C: The thing is working.

H: Okay. I just scared the shit out of Thrust and he said can I have a copy of your release. They'll think I made it up. So I said, no, no, I'm sure if I were in Washington I would give it to Ambassador Dobrynin personally. Now, the final \_\_\_\_\_ is 59-24. Not 68.

C: Oh, God, I've given it to the boss.

H: No, no, no, you can tell him what it was with the undecided out. You see that was their trouble, they got 68-32, that's the way they were counting it. But we do have 17% undecided. But that's alright. It's still overwhelming and...

C: Can you do something in that Lou to say with the undecided out, it comes up to this?

H: Well...

C: I'll tell you why.

H: It's 2 to 1.

C: I know it, but still that's a... wouldn't it be possible to say well, this is the way it is in the raw, but with the undecided out, here's the way it comes out, so that we get back to that original figure.

H: 2/3 you mean?

C: Well, the figure I gave him was 68-29.

H: Frankly...

C: I gave it to him, as a matter of fact, last evening and I have an idea where he may have used it.

H: You mean with the Russians?

C: Yep. I think Henry did. I have reason to...

H: That's alright. I told this guy..I just laid it right on the line. There's another part to it. We asked about a cease-fire, 51-31 want a stand still cease-fire. And then we asked about Thieu, we said if the peace terms meant that Thieu had to resign, 60-14 they said that. And the final one which is I must say, you may...sue me for this, but I think the ploy you'll see is a very good one. We asked, do you want to see...would you be willing as part of the peace agreement to let North Vietnam keep the territory it has in South Vietnam, 44-38 they favor that. Now, what I told the Russian, I gave him those because he was here and I figured okay and I want to put this in the column for this reason. What I say is, basically the American people agree totally with the President. The President came up with more liberal peace terms, isn't that right, and yet he's tough as nails. The American people, tough as nails behind the President, but they want to offer liberal peace terms and I said, take this down, write this down...there are two major facts that you're country must understand. One, that the people are solidly behind the President in what they're doing, in what he's doing, both in offering better peace terms and in being very tough, such as in mining the harbors. Number two, I can't tell you how long the people will be generous on such terms. I said, a year ago we had the 42-39 in favor of a coalition government and now it's almost 3 to 2 against a coalition government. And I said, don't misunderstand the true results to mean this means coalition. Not at all. It just means that they have no brief for Mr. Thieu. So, he took it and said could I get a copy of the release. He said, they'll think I made it up.

C: Lou, let me ask you this. Could this be phrased...you get 59-24...

H: It's exactly 68 an a two to 1 split.

C: Why couldn't you just add a sentence right after the 59-24 that says, with the undecided out, the figure is 68-29, whatever the original figure was.

H: Well, maybe I could use the 2/3 in words. That's a better way to do it.

C: With the undecided out,...

H: ..people with opinions on this question.

C: Yea, among people without opinions...I tell you what you could do that would just be fabulous is, among people who expressed opinions, 68% favor.

H: Okay.

C: That would be awfully helpful for two reasons. One, it would protect your credibility and mine with a particular individual but I ain't thinking about that

quite so much as his credibility if Henry used this the way Henry last night at 7:00 told me he was going to.

H: Let me fix that right now. I've got to go. I'll give you the others. Pairings are closer but the President 7, McGovern's up, no question about it. On a two way the President's 7 ahead of him and 8 ahead of Humphrey and Wallace bombed.

C: 7 over McGovern and 8 over Humphrey. That is closer. Hell of a plug for McGovern.

H: No question about his being up. He inherited the whole Muskie bid. Staggers me. He ain't no Goldwater. That won't be out for another week.

C: Well, the stuff you'll use ~~x~~ this weekend will be strictly on Vietnam.

H: Yep. As I outlined it. Let me make that one fix and go. You don't mind the rest of it, do you.

C: Hell no. The thing that is terribly important was the other thing.