

Richard Nixon Presidential Library  
Contested Materials Collection  
Folder List

<u>Box Number</u>	<u>Folder Number</u>	<u>Document Date</u>	<u>No Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Document Type</u>	<u>Document Description</u>
7	73	11/3/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	Domestic Policy	Memo	From Colson to Haldeman RE: recent conversation with William Paley, with transcription of the conversation attached. Handwritten note added by unknown. 5 pgs.


MEMORANDUM

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

EX-103  
GND



November 3, 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: H. R. HALDEMAN  
FROM: CHARLES COLSON   
SUBJECT: Conversation with William Paley

You cannot possibly appreciate the impact of the attached without hearing the tone of the voice. Paley was pleading. He sounded like a whipped dog and almost on the verge of tears. My voice was steely cold. Your letter was obviously exactly the right approach. As you will note from the attached, I did not agree to see him after the election nor did I say I wouldn't.

Chalk up one for our new task of destroying the old establishment.

Conversation with Wm. Paley, November 3, 1972

C: Hi, Bill.

P: Nothing could have been worse than your goddamn note.

C: I'm not sure it was any worse than the two-art series we were treated to.

P: Listen, fellow, will you let me come down after the election? There is nothing I can say now, but you can imagine a lot of things. I just didn't want you to think this was the result of any activity engineered here in my office or up on high from anyplace.

C: Well, I was the only guy from the White House....

P: It's just an area that I don't want to talk about and can't talk about. I just couldn't let your note go unanswered and I just wanted to call up and say please have a little faith in me.

C: Well, the election will be over Tuesday, Thank God.

P: Well, okay, I'm sorry, really, Chuck. There is nothing that was done by design or plan, I promise you.

C: Did you see the one this week?

P: I did. The one on Tuesday night?

C: Yes.

P: Yep, I saw it.

C: I thought it was probably the first time I've ever seen people found guilty for refusing to answer a negative charge -- of course, you can ~~not~~ disprove the negative, as you know.

P: As a matter of fact, the charge had been denied, which is even worse... I put it even stronger than you do and I don't know why the denial, if it's made, has to be made to us, you know.

C: Well, I don't know why it has to be made every day.

P: Well, I don't know why CBS has to have it made to it specifically and personally. It was a ridiculous position that we took and I sat there and saw it, and I'm not sure if you saw it when it was on the air, did you?

C: Oh, yes.

P: Anyway, I just wanted to call you....

C: Well, the sadness of it, Bill, is that the whole thing was in my view at least unnecessary and harmful all around, generally very, very harmful. Obviously the public ... I guess you have to give the public a hell of a lot more credit for having more intelligence than most people think they have because I gather from the latest poll, which I have this morning, they're going to go to the election booth and decide who's best qualified to be President, despite the best efforts of some people really to undermine the confidence of the public in the office. The institutional damage I think is very unfortunate.

P: Chuck, as I told you, I'm...in a way, concerned as to how it affects any one particular person, but my real concern is a very non-partisan one because my real responsibility, my real love, my real zeal is to this news organization of ours that I helped build for about 40 years, based on policies that are supposed to be fair and balanced and when those things don't happen the way they're supposed to happen, it's very hurtful.

C: I think it hurts all around, Bill. I think it's a bad thing for the country really.

P: Well, anyway I didn't let this thing go unnoticed and I..this is a whole situation that is so goddamn sensitive that if you'll let me, I want to come down after the election.

C: I'll be recuperating.

P: From getting good and drunk, I hope.

C: I suspect I'll do that.

P: It looks absolutely a shoo-in. We had..you don't see some of the local stuff we have here, but it's absolutely amazing what's happening in New York State.

C: I gather it is. The New York Daily News poll is certainly very encouraging.

P: Well, we've taken polls right along and there's just no question about it. I don't know...this could be..almost a clean sweep, you know. I think certainly there's a great possibility of 47 states...

C: Looks that way.

P: But maybe 50 and there's no question about the way the people feel. We did a half hour last night on how you're going to vote, this was a local show, WCBS-TV and we did a lot of sidewalk interviews and that sort of thing and it was just amazing how people came through with their feelings which would have made you and all of your associates very happy. One thing...if I can kibitz for a minute, the President was on, the night before last? on a political paid half hour.

C: No, it was last night.

P: Does he have any more of those?

C: He's got a 5 minute coming up on Monday night.

P: Just himself. Well, I hope he doesn't have more of those half hours like he had last night.

C: That's a little long, isn't it?

P: It was dudsville, really, and I think he needs...I know a little about mass circulation and this kind of thing needs the orchestration of other people including enthusiasm and a lot of other things.

C: You'll get some of that today and tomorrow -- he's campaigning with the crowds.

P: That's fine, but I'm talking now about the stuff that he goes on the air and pays for. The 5 minute pieces have got it because they're usually excerpts from things he's done and they're very effective, but I didn't know whether he was going before the cameras and sit still for another half hour...

C: *No*, that's not planned. McGovern is....

P: *I don't* know how you felt about it.

C: Well, I thought it was very low key...

P: Well, yea, but he made good points, but they could have been twice as effective if they had been put in the right setting and if he's going to read, by the way, for Christ sake, have the papers there, but don't keep them in front of the camera. If he looks down, people know he's reading, but it's very distracting to see the papers up themselves.

C: Yea, a number of people have mentioned that, the papers can be quite a distraction.

P: But this... the setting and atmosphere created when a person is trying to get a message across is terribly important and you know that and I think for a statesman making an address having to do with national problems or... where there's no contest going on, so to speak, the so-called fireside chat is very effective, but when there's a contest going on and people are... each side is trying to knock over the other side, I think it needs a little more than just the quiet solitude of a little room and I'm really glad to hear that he hasn't any more of the half-hour shows lined up.

C: Nope, that was the only one he did and it was done to....

P: I read someplace that he had 2 and 3 scheduled and I didn't even call to find out whether we had them... I thought you would give me the answer directly.

C: I think we're trying to clear time for 5 minutes... he will do a 5 minute speech. I think we're trying to clear time on CBS Monday night for the network buy for a half hour, but only 5 minutes of it would be the President speaking.

P: Well, how would the rest of it be used then?

C: I think for some of the documentary stuff.

P: But if he does go on himself will it be live from the White House?

C: It would be a tape.

P: I think 5 minutes can stand it and I think anything beyond that is pretty difficult.

C: Well, I appreciate that Bill -- we'll be seeing you.

P: Okay, fellow. After the election.