

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>
53	3	4/11/1972	<input type="checkbox"/>	Campaign	Memo	From Colson to Nixon RE: "Your Meeting with Secretary Connally This Afternoon" 2pg

**DOCUMENT WITHDRAWAL RECORD [NIXON PROJECT]**

DOCUMENT NUMBER	DOCUMENT TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE OR CORRESPONDENTS	DATE	RESTRICTION
N-1 [67]	Memo	Colson to the President re: "Your Meeting With Secretary Connally This Afternoon"	4/11/72	c(Nixon)

FILE GROUP TITLE <b>STAFF SECRETARY</b>	BOX NUMBER <b>83</b>
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FOLDER TITLE <b>PRESIDENTIAL MEMOS - 1972 CONNALLY</b>
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RESTRICTION CODES

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| <p>A. Release would violate a Federal statute or Agency Policy.</p> <p>B. National security classified information.</p> <p>C. Pending or approved claim that release would violate an individual's rights.</p> <p>D. Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of privacy or a libel of a living person.</p> | <p>E. Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information.</p> <p>F. Release would disclose investigatory information compiled for law enforcement purposes.</p> <p>G. Withdrawn and return private and personal material.</p> <p>H. Withdrawn and returned non-historical material.</p> |
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Presidential Materials Review Board

Review on Contested Documents

**Collection:** Staff Secretary  
**Box Number:** 83

**Folder:** Presidential Memos - 1972 Connally

<u>Document</u>	<u>Disposition</u>
67	Return Private/Political

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 11, 1972

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN...

MEMORANDUM FOR:

THE PRESIDENT

FROM:

CHARLES COLSON

SUBJECT:

Your Meeting with Secretary  
Connally This Afternoon

In connection with your meeting this afternoon with Secretary Connally, you might find of interest some very significant data which Sindlinger passed on to me last night. In two polls prior to Connally's meeting with the retailers, (March 16-March 22; March 23-March 30), we declined precipitously in political standing. In response to the question, "If next year's Presidential election were being held today, would you vote for the reelection of President Nixon?", we dropped to 39.8% yes and 29.2% no in the first poll and in the second we continued to decline to 37.7% yes and 30.8% no, our poorest showing since early August of 1971. Following Connally's meeting with the retailers, for which there was a high public awareness, there was a dramatic turn around. In the poll of March 31-April 4, the yes replies rose to 44.6% and the no replies declined to 25.2%. In a poll completed this past Sunday, the yes replies rose to 49.6% and the no replies declined to 21.6%.

Throughout this period, when respondents were asked for the number one reason that they would not vote for the President's reelection, approximately half cited, "not stopping inflation", four times as large as the next most frequent response and many times larger than the typical replies Sindlinger gets, "I am a Democrat", "not doing a good job", etc.

Sindlinger's polls always show a greater sensitivity to economic issues than anything else because generally the interviewer concentrates on economic questions before asking political questions. Hence the respondent is generally conditioned to thinking about the economy before expressing a political view. On the other hand, Sindlinger has an enormous statistical base and even if his information is distorted, the trend line would have to be regarded as a fairly significant barometer.

Sindlinger points out that this was the most volatile swing in public opinion since the two months preceding your August 15 statement last year. It is very unusual in his poll to show such sharp movement in the political questions. The fact that we have bounced back to a very strong position today, actually as high as we have ever been, indicates that the damage was temporary but it also indicates how explosive the food price issue is. Sindlinger attributes the bounce-back to the Connally meeting with retailers and the fact that food prices have indeed tapered off in recent weeks.

To summarize Sindlinger's advice and data: (1) we have to be very sensitive to this issue and alert to price rises, food in particular, (2) public attitudes are very volatile today especially on a pocketbook issue like this, and (3) political support for anyone in today's environment is fragile.

Over the coming months we have to watch carefully for any movement of this kind so that we can step in early, take hard, forceful action and prevent a re-occurrence of this kind of political erosion. In this instance, we almost waited too long. It is a little unnerving to think of the consequences had this particular cycle occurred next October.

Also, we are not yet out of the woods on this issue. Male yes responses continue to run significantly higher than female; there is still a spread, although not as big as it was a month ago. The spread between male and female support suggests that the food price issue is still alive. In short, we have to keep jawboning and/or take whatever other steps are necessary to at least demonstrate to the public that we are not going to let food prices rise.