



NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log*(rev. 9/08)*

Transcript #1: Part of a conversation among President Nixon, H. R. Haldeman, and Henry A. Kissinger in the Oval Office between 1:00 pm and 1:13 pm on April 20, 1971.

Conversation No. 484-13#1

President: Say, uh, while we are [unintelligible] together at least we, what, what is the situation, uh, John Ehrlichman was telling me that, - I didn't get to read the news summary this morning [unintelligible] that apparently those, those, those veterans they, down there looked pretty scrubby on television or somethin'.

Haldeman: Oh, they looked awful.

Kissinger: They looked disgusting.

Haldeman: And it's great; and the Washington Star last night had a great story about how they're, they're, they got girls all in their, sleepin' in their sleeping bags with them, and they're all smoking pot 'n' drinking beer on the --

Kissinger: Oh, they looked awful.

Haldeman: -- on the Mall.

President: And Mc-, and McGovern was talking to them?

Haldeman: And McGovern said, "I've never been as proud of a group of Americans as I am of this group" --

Kissinger: They all give the Communist --

Haldeman: -- and [unintelligible] scratching themselves.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log

(rev. 9/08)

Conv. No. 484-13#1 (cont.)

Kissinger: -- they give the Communist salute.

Haldeman: Yes, they do. They went to Arlington --

President: Well --

Haldeman: -- Cemetery and put a wreath on the Unknown Soldier and then, then gave the --

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- the Communist salute.

President: Yeah, yeah, yeah, and I understand Sen-, that Ramsey Clark gave them that Communist salute. Did you know that?

Haldeman: I didn't know that. I know he gave 'em - no, McGovern gave 'em the "V".

President: Oh.

Haldeman: They cheered McGovern when he have 'em the "V".

President: Yeah, but Ramsey Clark gave them, 'em that. I'm not surprised.

Kissinger: [Unintelligible] they're a, they're a disgusting-looking bunch.

President: Well, I had to raise hell with Mitchell today. He wanted to go out 'n' clean 'em out, and I said, "Not on your life. Leave 'em there. Leave 'em there."

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log

(rev. 9/08)

Conv. No. 484-13#1 (cont.)

Haldeman: Mitchell was gonna clean 'em out?

President: Well, he's, there's a court order.

Haldeman: I know.

President: And I --

Haldeman: Berger --.

President: I said, "Ju-just delay it. Just delay it. I don't want a --

Haldeman: Yeah.

President: -- hand on 'em." I says --

Haldeman: Uh, you just don't --.

President: "I didn't" --

Haldeman: In the first place --

President: -- I said --

Haldeman: -- [unintelligible].

President: -- "I don't want a hand laid on 'em." I said, "You can, you can go in and hand 'em the order and say, 'Gentlemen, you're asked to leave and,' but then just leave 'em

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log

(rev. 9/08)

Conv. No. 484-13#1 (cont.)

alone. Let the sons o' bitches there." And I want them up there at the Capitol. I'd like a few scruffy people up there grabbing Congressmen when they come through --

Haldeman: The Speaker --

President: -- screwing their secretaries.

Haldeman: -- the Southern Democratic Chairmen met with the Speaker this morning, and they all urged him to get to you and urge you not to do anything to move the veterans out. They said, "Just leave it there. It's, it's, you know, where it ought to be." And, and the Speaker called Clark and, and, uh, I told Clark that --.

President: What was their reason for doing so, I mean, what grounds?

Haldeman: The, the, the same thing, they were, they were not doing themselves, they were doing their own cause harm.

President: That's right. Friggin' left. We don't want [unintelligible].

Haldeman: And secondly, as soon as you - that's right - as soon as you move in on 'em, you're gonna get, you're gonna get, uh, massive television coverage of --

Kissinger: And that's --

Haldeman: -- the Federal --

Kissinger: -- what they want.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF**Tape Subject Log***(rev. 9/08)*

Conv. No. 484-13#1 (cont.)

Haldeman: -- of the Federal Government and the President - even though it's Washington Police, it will be the President.

President: Yeah.

Kissinger: They said on television that --

Haldeman: [Unintelligible].

Kissinger: -- we won't go without a confrontation.

Haldeman: That's okay.

Kissinger: But they look at, they [unintelligible].

President: [Unintelligible].

Haldeman: [Unintelligible].

Kissinger: They --.

Haldeman: John Dean is just running it.

President: Well, he doesn't know anything. Uh --.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible]

President: No, he definitely didn't know of the conversation I had with Mitchell.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log

(rev. 9/08)

Conv. No. 484-13#1 (cont.)

Haldeman: Yes, he does [unintelligible].

Kissinger: They look awful.

Haldeman: Kleindienst is running the Justice if you want to talk to him.

President: Well, [unintelligible], I just gotta be sure. Dean, John Dean [speaking to White House Operator]. Well, I laid it in, and Mitchell said, "Well, they're a lot of them gonna come next week to Rock Creek Park." I said, "Let 'em go down there." He said, "Well, that'll pose a security problem." I said, "Screw 'em. Let 'em go."

Haldeman: Now, tha-that's one we really wanna think through. That's Rennie Davis.

President: Yeah, so what'll we do?

Haldeman: And they're talking about seventy thousand of 'em.

President: Yeah.

Kissinger: They want a riot.

President: Camping in Rock Creek Park, and, and it seems to me that's the time, that's [telephone rings] the ones we bust.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log

(rev. 9/08)

Transcript #2: Part of a conversation among President Nixon, H. R. Haldeman, and Henry A. Kissinger in the Oval Office between 1:13 pm and 1:24 pm on April 20, 1971.

Conversation No. 484-13#2

Haldeman: That's, that's --.

President: 'S' way to do it. Let's get smart for a change.

Haldeman: The other thing, though, is that ya just might be better off to have a confrontation, and, and let it, let the, let it run its course. You're lettin' this one run its course, and the veterans are gonna --.

President: These people, they did look grubby to you, would you say?

Haldeman: [Unintelligible].

Kissinger: I saw them on every show; they look awful.

Haldeman: They really do, and they're, they had a great quote from one of 'em. They said, "When are we gonna leave?" And this one guy said, "We're not gonna leave 'til the war ends." And the other guy says, "The hell we aren't; we're gonna leave when the, when the beer and the pot runs out." [laughs]

Kissinger: They said --.

President: Has anything gotten through, I, uh, Colson told me that something did get through in terms of the fact that - a little thing, project I started with regard to how many are veterans - is that finally --

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log

(rev. 9/08)

Conv. No. 484-13#2 (cont.)

Haldeman: Yeah.

President: -- gettin' out?

Haldeman: Yeah. He's got three reporters in tryin' to work it out, and they've got a bunch of nonveterans. They, they --.

President: Ya know what he found on that, Henry? He said, "You know, Colson was almost in tears last night." He said, "You know the problem is the press don't want to run that side of the story."

Haldeman: They won't.

President: They do not want to find the fact that some of these are nonveterans. They will not run it.

Haldeman: They got all the, uh, veterans' organization guys are now coming in, and they're gonna rise up in indignation and say, "We represent a half million Vietnam veterans."

President: That's right.

Haldeman: "This is a thousand that claim to be Vietnam veterans. They don't represent 'em 'n' all that. So they're taking [unintelligible] --.

President: Incidentally, has Muskie spoken to 'em yet? Is he gonna speak?

Haldeman: He hasn't, to my knowledge.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF**Tape Subject Log***(rev. 9/08)*

Conv. No. 484-13#2 (cont.)

Kissinger: They look like a sick bunch, Mr. President. Really! If they had some clean-shaven Americans saying, "I was for the war and now I've turned against it," that would hurt.

Haldeman: They could've really done some harm if those guys had put on their neat uniforms, worn their ties, and've done themselves up --

President: Yeah, to look like Calley.

Haldeman: -- worn all - look like Calley, damn right - worn all their medals on their, on their ribbons.

Kissinger: They, they look like --.

Haldeman: They could o' really shook the people.

President: How many are blacks?

Haldeman: Not many.

Kissinger: Not many.

Haldeman: Doesn't look like it. The pictures I've seen looks like mostly whites.

Kissinger: And the one black they had on television last night was a real troublemaker.

Haldeman: He's the leader, that guy, he was on Sunday --

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log
(rev. 9/08)

Conv. No. 484-13#2 (cont.)

Kissinger: Yes.

Haldeman: -- I think.

President: Well --

Kissinger: So that --

Haldeman: They're not --

Kissinger: -- they're being stupid.

Haldeman: -- they're not gaining, ya know. They're gonna come here on Friday afternoon to turn in their medals --

President: Good.

Haldeman: -- and we've gone around on what to do on that. The way we're gonna do it is just have a White House messenger, just a guy in the mail room, take the, whatever they turn in, and take it away. When somebody asks who he is, why then just say he's a messenger who routes incoming things to the White House. He'd receive them.

President: Well, you're gotta play it c carefully.

Haldeman: And no [unintelligible] no, no build-up to it at all. Now, the Gold Star Mothers have risen up and have said that they want the medals turned over to them. I don't think we should do that 'cause that makes too big a thing out of it. But they're

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log

(rev. 9/08)

Conv. No. 484-13#2 (cont.)

gonna show up, apparently, at the same time to picket. The veterans come and turn in their medals; the Gold Star Mothers are gonna come and, and, and bitch about these people don't, they're disgracing, ya know, "My son turned in a lot more than medals," and, uh --

President: Good.

Haldeman: -- "I supported [unintelligible]."

President: How many, uh, I wonder what kind of medals they've got. I think some honest reporter oughta find out who the hell these people are. I'll lay you money there're not too many of 'em that had terrific records.

Haldeman: There, there are some.

President: There are bound to be --

Haldeman: And they've got [unintelligible].

President: -- and a McCloskey or two.

Haldeman: They're playin' in the ones that are. Uh, they've started a thing on that, that rumor, got out, you know, that you had said at the Congressional meeting that only thirty percent were veterans or something, and so that, that got 'em stirred up. So they're all, supposedly, turning in their discharge papers. Uh --

President: Who, who --

Haldeman: -- [unintelligible].

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF**Tape Subject Log***(rev. 9/08)*

Conv. No. 484-13#2 (cont.)

President: -- did you find out who put that out?

Haldeman: No.

President: No, well, then, then, uh, now, Bob, somebody did.

Haldeman: Somebody --.

President: God damn it, why don't we find out? [Unintelligible].

Haldeman: Somebody on the Hill did, and I talked to MacGregor, and he said that there was no discussion. I seem to remember [unintelligible].

President: MacGregor was there!

Haldeman: But I thought there might have been somethin' before you came in, where the --

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- Vice President or somebody else might have made the same, or maybe --.

President: I'll bet' ya Agnew said something.

Haldeman: Well, it could be also, all of our people 'n, uh, Colson's office, 'n' all these other things --

President: [Unintelligible].

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log

(rev. 9/08)

Conv. No. 484-13#2 (cont.)

Haldeman: -- have been playing it down, ya know, a hell of 'em. They aren't all veterans anyhow.

President: Yeah, [unintelligible].

Haldeman: Somebody here could very easily --

President: Could have said it.

Haldeman: -- have said that too.

President: But it was not even discussed. That's what burned my tail.

Haldeman: Not with you, no.

President: And then somebody --

Haldeman: [Unintelligible].

President: -- a [unintelligible] Congressman went back and said it? Is that what they mean?

Haldeman: That's where it came out; it was on the Hill that the White House had said this. [Unintelligible]. The Gold Star Mothers, uh --.

President: Well, has it been knocked down enough or not? The story?

Haldeman: Oh, yeah. That story didn't get any ride at all. It was, they said there was a rumor, and it was denied by the White House, and that was the end of that.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log

(rev. 9/08)

Conv. No. 484-13#2 (cont.)

President: All right.

Haldeman: But it got them started turning in their discharge papers, and now, I think somebody, we've got to get somebody to ask for the discharge papers to look through 'em 'n' see how many veterans there really are there with honorable discharges who served in Vietnam. Tell 'em that. 'Cause the discharge papers show the, uh, theater ribbons that they got.

Kissinger: It's a miserable-lookin' bunch.

Haldeman: It really is. It's, it's the scum of the, it's exactly --

Kissinger: It really looks like the unemployable scum of --

Haldeman: -- if there's a thousand there, it's one-twentieth of one percent of the men who've served in Vietnam, and that's about --

Kissinger: What you'd expect.

Haldeman: -- what you'd expect. And it's the scum of the guys who served in Vietnam. And it's, it's guys that probably got hooked on dope when they were over there, and there are [unintelligible].

Kissinger: They look awful. They speak incoherently. They're, they look like the sort of person that, uh, that, I think the more they' can get on television, the better off we are.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF**Tape Subject Log***(rev. 9/08)*

Conv. No. 484-13#2 (cont.)

Haldeman: It sickens people. It just has to. Now they --.

President: Television'll take 'em off now.

Haldeman: You won't get any violence out of them in any event, 'n' that's why we shouldn't arrest them.

President: Right. We don't worry --.

Haldeman: Because they would, they would just let themselves be hauled away. And they, you'd damn well, the TV camera would go in on some guy with no legs or something, ya know --

President: Right.

Haldeman: -- being thrown into a paddy wagon.

President: That's right. That's right.

Haldeman: And we --.

President: Well, if this order is not carried out, we'll have a new Counsel in the White House.

Haldeman: Oh, it'll be carried out.

President: No, I told Dean and --

Haldeman: Well, he --.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log

(rev. 9/08)

Conv. No. 484-13#2 (cont.)

President: -- and I told Mitchell.

Haldeman: There's no question on this.

President: Well, I know, but they, he was, Mitchell was arguing strenuously about the law this morning, and I said, "God damn it, forget the law." He's worried about the, about the, Rock Creek Park. Well, forget that --

Haldeman: Well, the Rock Creek --

President: -- precedent.

Haldeman: -- Park one is the other one, we th-, and Dean said - I was talking to him this morning - 'nd he said there's no problem on that; that we stall, we can stall this one and then go right ahead on Rock Creek Park. We have plenty of time. That's not for another week. And, uh, [unintelligible] think that, uh, [unintelligible].

Kissinger: Rock Creek Park, uh --.

Haldeman: Might be worth busting them and getting a confrontation.

President: Why?

Haldeman: Because they'll run loose and tear the town apart. They [unintelligible].

Kissinger: They want one.

Haldeman: They start busting windows and all that and they'll, they don't have uniforms or

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log

(rev. 9/08)

Conv. No. 484-13#2 (cont.)

medals.

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: They're, they're just plain shit.

Kissinger: That's like the Chicago rioters and that's --

President: Do you think [unintelligible], uh --

Kissinger: -- gonna help us.

President: -- would they tear, would they tear the town apart if they [unintelligible]?

Kissinger: They'll do, they'll try to do what they did in Chicago. That's how they did it in Chicago - to try to camp out [unintelligible].

President: I thought you said, Bob, this is gonna be a peaceful demonstration.

Kissinger: Saturday.

President: You told me that.

Haldeman: No, this part, the Saturday one is.

President: Oh, that's different. All right --

Haldeman: The big march is --

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF**Tape Subject Log***(rev. 9/08)*

Conv. No. 484-13#2 (cont.)

President: -- all right.

Haldeman: -- is Saturday. The big march is Saturday, and that's, the, the National Coalition for Peace or whatever it is. And that's, they, they don't even march at the White House. They're gonna gather on the Ellipse and they're gonna march down Pennsylvania Avenue to the Capitol. And they're gonna have their activities at the Capitol and then they're gonna come back and have a rock concert in the Sylvan Theater at the Washington Monument Saturday night. That's Saturday's demonstration.

Kissinger: How many do we expect?

Haldeman: At least a hundred thousand, maybe two hundred thousand. Based on bus loads, they've got buses and trains for twenty-five thousand. The factor has been in the past four to one --

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- which you get [unintelligible] by the park [unintelligible].

President: What's the, uh, what, what figures are w-, are we getting out as our estimate?

Haldeman: Half a million.

President: Half a million? [Unintelligible].

Haldeman: Half a million, trying to push the million, but it's kind of hard to get that to carry.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log

(rev. 9/08)

Conv. No. 484-13#2 (cont.)

Half a million's -- .

President: Half a million is being pushed.

Haldeman: Yeah, and the biggest --.

President: Yeah, yeah.

Haldeman: -- and that, it'll be the biggest demonstration in history.

President: Well, they have to go to four-hundred thousand to make it the biggest, right?

Haldeman: It won't be as big as either the biggest or the second biggest. It'll be the third biggest if it's, ya know, which is - it's big enough.

President: Oh, it doesn't make any difference beyond [unintelligible] number. It'll be enough.

Haldeman: Is this --?

President: It'll be big enough.

Haldeman: It'll be big. They'll have a lot of people, but I don't think --

President: Don't --

Haldeman: -- nobody gives a damn.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log

(rev. 9/08)

Conv. No. 484-13#2 (cont.)

President: -- don't give, don't, don't assume that they aren't gonna get a little rough too.
Don't assume it. I'll bet ya they break some windows.

Haldeman: Oh, they may very well, and they know because --.

President: I think there's that --.

Kissinger: But, the Rennie Davis group you can be damned sure is gonna --

Haldeman: They're working hard --

Kissinger: -- [unintelligible].

Haldeman: -- this group is working hard not to be. They've got your, your Quakers are all mobilizing marshals, and, and they've got ten-thousand marshals they say to, uh --

President: Quakers.

Haldeman: -- make sure that they keep 'em peaceful and quiet. And they help.

President: I don't want any of those damn Quakers over here to see me.

Haldeman: All their literature is, is, ya know, that "we lose our point if we get violent, if we have any violence." That's, they really believe it.

Kissinger: That's their trademark.

President: They, look, we shall see.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF**Tape Subject Log***(rev. 9/08)*

Transcript #3: Part of a conversation between President Nixon and H. R. Haldeman in the Oval Office between 1:24 pm and 1:43 pm on April 20, 1971.

Conversation No. 484-13#3

President: [Unintelligible] horrified with this group down there today.

Haldeman: [Unintelligible] spotted them. They were all coming back from Arlington. The veter-, the shaggy veterans went by. Some nice old, lit-, some nice little - apparently some the DAR ladies were on the steps, and some nice little lady said, "I don't think you're doing our country any good at all." And, and they started immediately up to chant, "One, two, three, four, we don't want your fucking war." He said all the ladies just stood there [laughs] with their mouths hanging open. [Unintelligible] themselves so much more harm than good.

President: You really think they do, don't ya?

Haldeman: Oh, yeah.

President: I hope so. I don't know whether they [unintelligible] look to the country.

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log

(rev. 9/08)

Transcript #4: Part of a conversation between President Nixon and H. R. Haldeman in the Oval Office between 1:24 pm and 1:43 pm on April 20, 1971.

Conversation No. 484-13#4

President: You know, I, I, I, I am so, so, so delighted that those, I just noticed the people, the first batch that came in are so ugly.

Haldeman: Well, [unintelligible] veterans are, because the veterans had a potential.

President: Oh, boy!

Haldeman: But, uh, ya didn't [unintelligible].

President: -- what I meant was that I'm glad they're so ugly. I [unintelligible] television, I think, else the, I think the, well, the next one will re-, you kn-, you will be a, a [unintelligible].

Haldeman: Oh, yeah. But the veterans could've been, if they played it smart, they could've --.

President: Been.

Haldeman: If they'd sh-, all shaved 'n' cut their hair, 'n', see all the shaggy hair, beards? [Unintelligible]. You know they just really -

President: Yeah.

Haldeman: -- not very impressive, and they were wearin' scroungy fatigues [unintelligible].