

man at the request of then NSC aide Col. Alexander Haig. Haig suggested the tap material be sent elsewhere because of the "enormous load" being carried by the NSC, Mr. Nixon said.

Mr. Nixon dismissed as "malicious and vicious" any charges that the material was sent to Haldeman for political purposes. Halperin had at the time begun working for the political candidacy of Democratic presidential hopefuls.

"There was no political use and no private use that I know of. None was authorized. None was intended. I wanted to lay that to rest once and for all," Mr. Nixon said.

Even if there were any misuse of the material, it

was done in good faith, Mr. Nixon suggested. "Now it is going to take somebody much better than you or wiser than I to sit in judgment as to their good faith on that particular issue as to whether their motivation was political or whether their motivation was basically the security of the nation," Mr. Nixon said.

Nixon said that although no one asked him about the placing or continuation of the Halperin tap specifically, he believes in retrospect he would have approved it.

"I believe that ... this kind of activity first, was not only right but then from the standpoint of security of this country, I think it was legally right. I do not suggest this, that mistakes were not made as they inevitably will be, particularly in such a highly sensitive area.

"By 'mistakes', I mean possible infringements on the rights of privacy in the use of material for political purposes. Although there, I think a good faith defense might well be made."