

MANSON CALLS NIXON KEY TO CONVICTION

AUG 13 1975

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 12 (UPI) — Charles M. Manson says that a pronouncement of his guilt by then-President Nixon — prominently displayed in newspaper headlines — was the main reason he and three female followers were found guilty of the Tate-Labianca slayings.

The cult leader of a group of followers known as the "family" made the statement in a copyrighted interview with Stan Atkinson of KTVU in San Francisco and broadcast here, following Mr. Manson's appeal for a new trial.

The appeal, filed in the State cited a June 30 Supreme Court

decision giving defendants the right to act as their own lawyers. Mr. Manson protested at his 1971 trial that he did not want a defense attorney and preferred to act as his own counsel. He was denied.

The appeal was filed on behalf of Mr. Manson, Patricia Krenwinkle, Susan Atkins and Leslie van Houten, all convicted of slaying Sharon Tate, the actress; four of her house guests, and Mr. and Mrs. Leno Labianca.

In the interview, Mr. Manson said of his decision not to present a legal defense at his trial: "The primary reason came when the President of the United States said we were guilty, directly or indirectly. That pretty much made up the minds of the people."

NYTimes

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