

NIXON CONVERSATION ON CALLEY REPORTED

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Washington, April 25 - White House insistence that President Nixon has scrupulously avoided giving any sign of prejudging the fate of First Lieut. William L. Calley Jr. is at odds with reports of a telephone conversation between the President and Representative Clin E. Teague, Democrat of Texas. According to these reports, on March 31, the same day that an Army military court sentenced Lieutenant Calley to life imprisonment for the murder of at least 22 South Vietnamese civilians, Mr. Nixon discussed with Representative Teague whether the sentence was too harsh.

Mr. Teague, chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' affairs and chairman of the House Democratic caucus, reportedly told Mr. Nixon that he felt the sentence should be lighter. According to other Democrats who spoke with Mr. Teague later, the President urged the Representative to talk up that attitude among other influential members of the House.

It was not until three days later, on April 3, that the White House, taking note of intense public interest in the Calley case, announced that Mr. Nixon would make the final decision on the verdict and sentence.

John D. Ehrlichman, the President's assistant for domestic affairs, said when he made the announcement that Mr. Nixon was "very much aware of the necessity to in no way comment on the merits of the case or what he thinks the penalty should be, if any, or in any other way getting into the substance of the case."

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Nixon Administration.)