

transcribed from tape

There were reports today that presidential adviser H.R. Haldeman admitted responsibility for organizing legal political investigations. Judy Miller [of the Pacifica Washington Bureau] reports:

Miller: The Washington Star-News reported today that H.R. Haldeman, President Nixon's chief of staff, told a group of Republican congressmen that he was personally responsible for organizing a political intelligence-gathering operation on Nixon's behalf last year, but that the project did not involve any illegal activities. Haldeman also reportedly told the G.O.P. congressmen that Nixon's political aides had no connection with any illegal activities during the 1972 presidential campaign, but that they had not been effective in presenting their case to the public.

Haldeman reportedly made his comments on March 28th in a meeting with the Wednesday Group, an organization of 29 moderate and progressive Republican congressmen.

Although White House press secretary Ron Ziegler acknowledged that Haldeman had attended the secret meeting, he denied that Haldeman had admitted any - quote - "mishandling or bungling" in the Nixon Administration's response to the growing controversy. Asked about Haldeman's alleged admission that he set up an intelligence-gathering operation, Ziegler would only say that the Committee for the Re-election of the President would naturally have been interested in what Nixon's potential Democratic opponents were doing.

[Complete.]