

# HALDEMAN POWER AFTER HE QUIT JOB IS CITED BY AIDE

6 Months After Leaving, He  
Supervised Inspection of  
His Files, Court Is Told

KEPT LOCK COMBINATION

He Reportedly Disclosed It  
Only 2 Weeks Ago During  
Search for Document

By LESLEY OELSNER

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, Dec. 4—A

former aide testified today that H. R. Haldeman retained so much authority at the White House following his departure from the Nixon Administration that he was able, six and a half months after his resignation as chief of staff, to supervise the inspection by present White House aides of files that he had left behind.

According to testimony in Federal court here today by one of his former aides, Mr. Haldeman did not even disclose until about two weeks ago, the combination to the lock that was keeping the files secure.

In another development, Justice Department officials said they would shortly turn over to a Federal judge a key White House tape and other documents related to a possible link between Administration help to the milk industry and campaign contributions by dairymen. [Details on Page 30.]

**Told to Find Document**

Lawrence M. Higby, once Mr. Haldeman's deputy, testified today in the hearing on the Watergate tapes that he was instructed by his former chief last Nov. 15 to find a certain document in the Haldeman files in the Executive Building.

The document or a copy was then to be turned over to White House officials said Mr. Higby, who is now a deputy at the Office of Management and Budget.

The document, when Mr. Higby found it shortly thereafter, turned out to be Mr. Haldeman's handwritten two-page record of his meeting with

President Nixon on June 20, 1972—the meeting that was recorded on the tape that now has an 18-minute buzzing sound that obliterates the only segment of the conversation relating to Watergate.

**Exercised Control**

According to the White House, it was only one day earlier, on Nov. 14, that the full 18-minute gap was first discovered. And as Mr. Higby recounted it today, he got the "clear impression" from his phone call with Mr. Haldeman that somebody at the White House, presumably Alexander M. Haig Jr., Mr. Nixon's chief of staff, had requested the document from Mr. Haldeman.

Mr. Haldeman knew by then of the existence of the gap, Mr. Higby said.

Mr. Higby testified that Mr. Haldeman, even while agreeing to turn the paper over, still exercised control over the man-

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ner in which this was to be done.

He gave his onetime aide "instructions," Mr. Higby said, telling him to "precisely follow those instructions" and to telephone Mr. Haldeman back "if there was any deviation."

"He indicated I was only to get his June 20 notes," Mr. Higby went on.

The "instructions," as Mr. Higby recounted them, started with Mr. Haldeman giving his former subordinate the combination to the lock that secured Mr. Haldeman's personal filing cabinet in Room 522 of the Executive Office Building.

Mr. Higby was then told to go to Mr. Haig to get a precise list of the items that were to be taken from the files, he said. Then, by his account, he was to go and get the material that Mr. Haig had requested.

Mr. Higby said that he went to Mr. Haig, but that Mr. Haig sent him to J. Fred Buzhardt Jr., the President's special counsel on Watergate matters. Mr. Buzhardt gave Mr. Higby a list of seven items, Mr. Haig testified, and then Mr. Higby went to the file room with a Secret Service agent and, after a search, found the Haldeman notes of the June 20 conversation.

At about this time, as Mr. Higby told it, Mr. Buzhardt entered the room and said that he wanted the original notes and not just the copy that Mr. Higby had apparently intended to provide.

**Higby Called Haldeman**

Mr. Higby then telephoned Mr. Haldeman, he said. First, he read him the notes—notes

that say that the President ordered Mr. Haldeman to carry out a public-relations offensive to counteract the Watergate break-in three days earlier.

"He just made comments like 'Oh,' 'Hmmm,' 'That's not a problem,'" Mr. Higby said of Mr. Haldeman. When he was asked by the assistant special prosecutor, Jill Volner, how he had interpreted this response, Mr. Higby said that he thought Mr. Haldeman's reaction to the segment on public relations was, "I bet they'll make something of that."

Then, Mr. Higby said, he told Mr. Haldeman that Mr. Buzhardt had demanded the original notes. Mr. Haldeman acquiesced, the witness continued, but only after specifying that a copy was to be made and inserted in the file.

Mr. Higby said that he had given the notes either to Mr. Buzhardt or to the Secret Service agent. Then he went back to Mr. Buzhardt's office, accompanied by Mr. Haig, who had gone to the file room but stayed outside. And Mr. Haig, Mr. Higby went on, "insisted to me that he had to have the combination."

Mr. Higby telephoned Mr. Haldeman, who said that Mr. Haig should ask him, Mr. Haldeman, directly. The following morning, Nov. 16, Mr. Haldeman told Mr. Higby to give the combination to Mr. Haig.

Mr. Higby said that he went twice more to the files to look up other items requested by the White House. He mentioned one that he found but that Mr. Buzhardt, after learning of its contents, did not bother to take.

It was a "talking paper" prepared for Mr. Haldeman in December, 1971, and involved the 1972 campaign. It contained a reference to "the need to set up separate accounts involving various funds, including some money from the dairy producers," Mr. Higby said.