

Comparisons Between Passages in the

Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, July 9—Following is the text of a comparison, made by the House Judiciary Committee, of selected passages from transcripts prepared by the committee and by the White House of President Nixon's Watergate conversations. The comparisons are preceded by a foreword by the committee chairman, Representative Peter W. Rodino Jr., Democrat of New Jersey.

On June 21 The New York Times published a comparison of portions of the transcripts of four of the conversations—those of Feb. 28, March 21 (two conversations) and March 22, all 1973.

FOREWORD

The Committee on the Judiciary has today released a volume entitled "Transcripts of Eight Recorded Presidential Conversations." The conversations among President Nixon, John Dean and others took place on Sept. 15, 1972; Feb. 28, 1973; March 13, 1973; March 21, 1973 (two conversations); March 22, 1973 and April 16, 1973 (two conversations).

Transcripts of seven of these eight conversations (all except the conversation on the afternoon of April 16, 1973) were initially delivered by President Nixon to the special prosecutor between Jan. 1 and 9, 1974, and to the committee between March 8 and 15, 1974. White House transcripts of these eight conversations appeared in a publication entitled "Submission of Recorded Presidential Conversations" delivered to the committee and released by President Nixon to the public on April 20, 1974.

The seven White House transcripts received by the special prosecutor in January, 1974, are nearly the same (except for minor differences, deletion of expletives, and the differences footnoted in this document in the Sept. 15, 1972, conversation) as the published White House edited transcripts.

This document contains comparisons between certain passages in the transcripts of the eight conversations delivered by the President to the committee and released to the public in April and the same passages as transcribed by the committee's inquiry staff. It does not reflect all differences between the two sets of transcripts.

It does not draw any conclusions as to the reasons for, or the significance of, the differences. It has been prepared solely as an aid to the committee in its deliberations. Each of the passages compared in this volume should be read in the context of the entire conversation from which it is taken.

Page citations are to the volume entitled "Transcripts of Eight Recorded Presidential Conversations" published by the committee, and to the blue volume released by the White House entitled, "Submission of Recorded Presidential Conversations, April 30, 1974."

SEPT. 15, 1972

5:23 to 6:17 P.M.

OVAL OFFICE

The President, H. R. Haldeman and John W. Dean 3d

House Judiciary

WHITE HOUSE

PRESIDENT: Well, you had quite a day today, didn't you? You got, uh, Watergate, uh, on the way, huh?

DEAN: Quite a three months.

(Pages 9-10)

PRESIDENT: They're all in it together.

DEAN: That's right.

PRESIDENT: They should just, uh, just behave and, and, recognize this, this is, again, this is war. We're getting a few shots. It'll be over. Don't worry. [Unintelligible] I wouldn't want to be on the other side right now. Would you? I wouldn't want to be in Edward Bennett Williams' position after this election.

(Page 55)

P. [. . .] You had quite a day today didn't you. You got Watergate on the way didn't you?

D. We tried.

(Pages 64-65)

P. We are all in it together. This is a war. We take a few shots and it will be over. We will give them a few shots and it will be over. Don't worry. I wouldn't want to be on the other side right now. Would you? position after this election.*

The bracketed material does not appear in the volume of White House edited transcripts, "Submission of Recorded Presidential Conversations, April 30, 1974." It is in the White House transcript which was given to the Special Prosecutor in January, 1974, and the Judiciary Committee in March, 1974.

DEAN. No. No.

[D. No.]

PRESIDENT: None of these bastards—

DEAN: He, uh, he's done some rather unethical things that have come to light already, which in — again, Richey has brought to our attention.

[He has done some rather unethical things that have come about already and Richey has brought them to our attention.]

White House and Committee Transcripts

WEDNESDAY, JULY 10, 1974

PRESIDENT: Yeah.
DEAN: He went down —
HALDEMAN: Keep a log on all that.
DEAN: Oh, we are, on these. Yeah.
PRESIDENT: Yeah.
HALDEMAN: Because afterwards that is a guy.
PRESIDENT: We're going after him.
HALDEMAN: that is a guy we've got to ruin.
DEAN: He had, he had an ex parte —

PRESIDENT: You want to remember, too, he's an attorney for the Washington Post.
DEAN: I'm well aware of that.
PRESIDENT: I think we are going to fixe the son-of-a-bitch. Believe me. We are going to. We've got to, because he's a bad man.
DEAN: Absolutely.

PRESIDENT: He misbehaved very badly in the Hof-fa matter. Our—some pretty bad conduct, there, too, but go ahead.
DEAN: as less than our

Along that line, uh, one of the things I've tried to do, is just keep notes on a lot of people who are emerging as.
PRESIDENT: That is right.
DEAN: an less then our friends.

PRESIDENT: Great.
(Page 15)

HALDEMAN: The Post is—
PRESIDENT: The Post has asked—it's going to have its problems.

HALDEMAN: [Unintelligible]

DEAN: The networks, the networks are good with Maury coming back three days in a row and—

PRESIDENT: That's right. Right. The main thing is The Post is going to have damnable, damnable problems out of this one. They have a television station.

DEAN: That's right, they do.

PRESIDENT: and they're going to have to get it renewed.

HALDEMAN: They've got a radio station, too.

PRESIDENT: Does that come up too? The point is, when does it come up?

DEAN: I don't know. But the practice of non-licensees filing on top of licensees has certainly gotten more.

PRESIDENT: That's right.

DEAN: more active in the, in the area.

PRESIDENT: And it's going

[H. Keep a log on them] [because afterwards that is a guy] [we have to ruin.]

[P. You want to remember he is also the lawyer for The Washington Post.]

[We are going to fix (expletive deleted) believe me. We've got to. He is a bad man.]

[He misbehaved very badly in the (inaudible).]

D. Along that line, one of the things I've tried to do, I have begun to keep notes on a lot of people who are emerging as less than our friends [. . .]

(PAGE 71)

[P. Sure. This is alright. The main thing is the Post is going to have damnable time—they have a television station]* [and they are going to have it renewed.]

[H. They have a radio station, too.]

[P. Does that come under too?]

[D. Non-licensees file on top of licensees.]

[P. It is going to be (exple-

tive deleted) active here.]

[P. The game has to be played awfully rough. I don't know who now, but you will talk to Bill. I don't know which one.]

H. Yes, I will talk to Bill.

his wife, uh, dead. It's a tough thing.

DEAN: Well,
PRESIDENT: We have to do [unintelligible]

DEAN: every indication
PRESIDENT: You'll have to do—

DEAN: that they're, they're hanging in tough right now.

PRESIDENT: What the hell do they expect, though? Do they expect that they will get clemency within a reasonable time?

DEAN: I think they do. [Unintelligible] going to do.

PRESIDENT: What would you say? What would you advise on that?

DEAN: Uh, I think it's one of those things we'll have to watch very closely. For example—

PRESIDENT: You couldn't do it, you couldn't do it, say, in six months?

DEAN: No.
PRESIDENT: No.

DEAN: No, you couldn't. [. . .]

(Page 40-41)

PRESIDENT: [. . .] "I will not comment on the hearings while they are in process." [Unintelligible.] And then I, of course if they break through—if they get a lot luckier—But you see, it's best not to cultivate—and I get Ziegler to do the same—it's best not to elevate that thing here to the White House. 'Cause I don't want the White House gabbing around about the God damned thing. Now there, of course, you'd say, "But you leave it all to them." [High frequency tone for four seconds.]

PRESIDENT: our policy. But the President should not become [unintelligible] on this case. Do you agree to that?

D. Well there is every indication they are hanging in tough right now.

P. What the hell do they expect though? Do they expect clemency in a reasonable time? What would you advise on that?

D. I think it is one of those things we will have to watch very closely. For example,—

P. You couldn't do it, say, in six months.

D. No, you couldn't [. . .]

(Page 103)

P. [. . .] I will not comment on the hearings while they are in process. Of course, if they break through—if they get muckraking—it is best not to cultivate that thing here at the White House. If it is done at the White House again they are going to drop the (adjective deleted) thing. Now there, of course, you say but you leave it all to them. We'll see as time goes on. Maybe we will have to change our policy. But the President should not become involved in any part of this case. Do you agree with that?

March 13, 1973

Oval Office

12:42 to 2:00 P.M.

The President, John Dean and H. R. Haldeman

(Page 71)

PRESIDENT: Did Strachan?

DEAN: Yes.

PRESIDENT: He knew?

DEAN: Yes.

PRESIDENT: About Watergate?

DEAN: Yes.

PRESIDENT: Well, then, Bob knew. He probably told Bob, then. He may not have. He may not have.

DEAN: He was, he was judicious in what he, in what he relayed, and, uh, but Strachan is as tough as nails. I—

PRESIDENT: What'll he say? Just go in and say he didn't know?

DEAN: He'll go in and stonewall it and say, "I don't know anything about what you are talking about."

He has already done it twice, as you know, in interviews.

[Page 72]

DEAN: That's right. And I said, "Chuck, people have said that you were involved in this, involved in that, involved in this." And he said, "I—that's not true," and so on and so forth. Uh, I don't I think that Chuck had knowledge that something was going on over there. A lot of people around here had knowledge that something was going on over there. They didn't have any knowledge of the details of the specific of, of the whole thing.

(Page 146)

P. Strachan?

D. Yes.

P. He knew?

D. Yes.

P. About the Watergate?

D. Yes.

P. Well, then, he probably told Bob. He may not have.

D. He was judicious in what he relayed, ubt Strachan is as tough as nails. He can go in and stonewall, and say, "I don't know anything about what you are talking about." He has already done it twice you know, in interviews.

[Pages 147-148]

D. That's right. I said, "Chuck, people have said that you were involved in this, involved in that, involved in all of this. He said, "that is not true, etc." I think that Chuck had knowledge that something was going on over there, but he didn't have any knowledge of the details of the specifics of the whole thing.

Feb. 28, 1973

Oval Office

9:12 to 10:23 A.M.

The President, and John Dean

(Page 40)

PRESIDENT: [. . .] I feel for those poor guys in jail, I mean, I don't know—particularly for Hunt. Hunt with

(Page 102)

P. [. . .] I feel for those poor guys in jail, particularly for Hunt with his wife dead.

(Page 148)

PRESIDENT: It was a dry hole, huh?

DEAN: That's right.

PRESIDENT: Jesus Christ.

DEAN: Well, they were just really getting started.

PRESIDENT: Yeah, Yeah. But, uh, Bob one time said about the fact we got some information about this or that or the other, but, I, I think it was about the Convention, what they were planning, I said (unintelligible). So I assume that must have been MacGregor, I mean not MacGregor, but Segretti.

DEAN: No.

PRESIDENT: Bob must have known about Segretti.

DEAN: Well, I—Segretti really wasn't involved in the intelligence gathering to speak of at all.

(Page 73)

PRESIDENT: [Unintelligible] to think that Mitchell and Bob would allow, would have allowed this kind of operation to be in the Committee.

DEAN: I don't think he knew it was there.

PRESIDENT: You don't

DEAN: I don't—

PRESIDENT: You don't think Mitchell knew about this thing?

DEAN: Oh, no, no, no. Don't mis—I don't think he knew that people—I think he knew that Liddy was out

P. A dry hole?

D. That's right.

P. (Expletive deleted)

D. Well, they were just really getting started.

P. Yeah. Bob one time said something about something, this or that or something, but I think it was something about the Convention, I think it was about the convention problems they were planning something. I assume that must have been MacGregor—not MacGregor, but Segretti.

D. No. Segretti wasn't involved in the intelligence gathering piece of it at all.

(Page 149)

P. To think of Mitchell and Bob would have allowed—would have allowed—this kind of operation to be in the campaign committee!

D. I don't think he knew it was there.

P. I don't think that Mitchell knew about this sort of thing.

D. Oh, no, no! Don't misunderstand me. I don't think that he knew the people. I think he knew that Liddy

intelligence-gathering.

PRESIDENT: Well?

DEAN: I don't think he knew that Liddy would use a fellow like McCord, for God's sake, who worked for the Committee. I can't believe that. [. . .]

(Page 74)

PRESIDENT: Well, what about the hang-out thing?

[Unknown person enters, receives instruction from the President to take something to Haldeman, and leaves the room.]

PRESIDENT: Uh, is it too late to, to, frankly, go the hang-out road? Yes, it is.

DEAN: I think it is. I think—Here's the—The hang-out road—

PRESIDENT: The hang-out road's going to have to be rejected. I, some, I understand it was rejected.

DEAN: It was kicked around. Bob and I and, and, and—

PRESIDENT I know Ehrlichman always felt that it should be hang-out. [Unintelligible]

DEAN: Well, I think I convinced him why that he wouldn't want to hang-out either. There is a certain domino situation here. [. . . .]

was out intelligence gathering.

D. I don't think he knew that Liddy would use a fellow like McCord, (expletive removed), who worked for the Committee. I can't believe that.

(Page 150)

P. Is it too late to go the hang-out road?

D. Yes, I think it is.

D. Yes, I think it is. The hang-out road—

P. The hang-out road (inaudible).

D. It was kicked around Bob and I and—

P. Ehrlichman always felt it should be hang-out.

D. Well, I think I convinced him why he would not want to hang-out either. There is a certain domino situation here [. . .]

MARCH 21, 1973

10:12 to 11:55 A.M.

Oval Office

The President, John Dean and H. R. Haldeman

(Page 84)

DEAN: I will go back over that, and tell

PRESIDENT: Was that Colson?

DEAN: you where I think the, the soft spots are.

PRESIDENT: Colson—that, that, that Colson, uh, you think was the, uh, was the person who

DEAN: I think he,

PRESIDENT: pushed?

PRESIDENT: [Unintelligible]. Maybe—Well, whether it's maybe too late to do anything about it, but I

(Page 178)

D. I will go back over that, and take out any of the soft spots.

P. Colson, you think was the person who pushed?

(Page 187)

P. [unintelligible] but I would certainly keep that cover for whatever it is worth.

would certainly keep that, [laughs] that cover for whatever it's worth.

DEAN: I'll—

DEAN: I'll—

PRESIDENT: Keep the Committee.

DEAN: Af—, after, well, that, that, that's

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible)

(Page 94)

PRESIDENT: Let me say, there shouldn't be a lot of people running around getting money. We should set up a little—

Page 96

PRESIDENT: Well, your, your major, your major guy to keep under control is Hunt.

DEAN: That's right.

PRESIDENT: I think. Because he knows.

DEAN: He knows so much.

PRESIDENT: About a lot of other things.

DEAN: He knows so much. Right. Uh, he could sink Chuck Colson. [. . .]

DEAN: Now we've got Kalmbach. [Coughs]

PRESIDENT: Yeah, that's a tough one.

(Page 97)

DEAN: [. . .] Uh, I don't know of anything that Herb has done that is illegal, other than the fact that he doesn't want to blow the whistle on a lot of people, and may find himself in a perjury situation.

PRESIDENT: Well, if he, uh, he could—because he will be asked about that money?

(Pages 97-98)

PRESIDENT: How would you handle him, then, John. For example, would you just have him put the whole thing out?

DEAN: [Draws breath]

PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I mean I don't mind the five hundred thousand dollars and I don't mind the four hundred thousand dollars.

DEAN: No, that.

PRESIDENT: for activities [unintelligible]

DEAN: that, that, uh, that doesn't bother me either. There's — as I say, Herb's problems are.

PRESIDENT: There's a surplus—

DEAN: politically embarrassing, but not as—not criminal.

PRESIDENT: Well, they're embarrassing, sure—he, he just handled matters that were between the campaigns, before anything was done. [. . .]

(Page 98)

PRESIDENT: All right. How do your other vulnerabilities go together?

DEAN: The other vulnerabilities: We've got a, uh, runaway Grand Jury up in the Southern District.

PRESIDENT: Yeah, I heard.

DEAN: They're after Mitchell and Stans on some sort of bribe or influence peddling

PRESIDENT: On Vesco.

DEAN: With Vesco.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

DEAN: [. . .] Apparently, Ehrlichman has some meetings with Vesco, also. Uh, Don Nixon Jr., came in to see John a couple of times, uh, about the problem.

PRESIDENT: Not about the complaint.

DEAN: That, there's, uh—the fact of the matter is—

PRESIDENT: [Unintelligible] about a job.

DEAN: That's right. And, and, and, uh, I—

PRESIDENT: We're, is it—Ehrlichman's totally to blame on that.

DEAN: Yeah, well, I think the White House.—

(Page 194)

P. Let me say there shouldn't be a lot of people running around getting money—

(Page 196)

P. Your major guy to keep under control is Hunt?

D. That is right.

P. I think. Does he know a lot?

D. He knows so much. He could sink Chuck Colson.

(Page 197)

D. Now we've got Kalmbach. [. . .]

(Page 198)

D. [. . .] I don't know of anything that Herb has done that is illegal, other than the fact that he doesn't want to blow the whistle on a lot of people, and may find himself in a perjury situation. [. . .]

P. How would you handle him, John, for example? Would you have him put the whole thing out? I don't mind the \$500,000 and the \$400,000.

D. No—that doesn't bother me either. As I say, Herb's problems are politically embarrassing, but not criminal.

P. Well he just handled matters between campaigns.

Page (199)

P. How about the other probabilities?

D. We have a runaway Grand Jury up in the Southern District. They are after Mitchell and Stans on some sort of bribe or influence peddling with Vesco, [. . .]

D. [. . .] Apparently Ehrlichman had some meetings with Vesco, also. Don Nixon Jr. came into see John a couple of times about the problem.

P. Not about Vesco, but about Don Jr.? Ehrlichman never did anything for Vesco?

PRESIDENT: [Unintelligible]

DEAN: No one has done anything for—

PRESIDENT:—Vesco. Matter of — not for the prosecutor.

(Page 100)

DEAN: That's what really troubles me. For example, what happens if it starts breaking, and they do find a criminal case against a Haldeman, a Dean, a Mitchell, an Ehrlichman? Uh, that is—

PRESIDENT: Well, if it really comes down to that, we cannot, maybe—We'd have to shed it in order to contain it again.

DEAN: I know, sir, it is. Well I can just tell from our conversations that, you know, these are things that you had no knowledge of.

PRESIDENT: The absurdity of the whole damned thing.

DEAN: But it—

PRESIDENT: bugging and so on. [. . .]

(Pages 100-101)

PRESIDENT: Called [unintelligible] and said, "We've got a, we've got a good plan." I don't know what the Christ he would be doing. Oh, I'll bet you. I know why. That was at the time of I.T.T. He was trying to get something going there because I.T.T. they were bugging us. I mean they were

DEAN: Right.

PRESIDENT: giving us hell.

DEAN: Well, I know, I know he used, uh,

PRESIDENT: Hunt to go out there?

DEAN: Hunt.

PRESIDENT: I knew about that.

DEAN: Yeah.

PRESIDENT: I did know about it. Uh, I knew that there was, there was something going on there.

DEAN: Right.

PRESIDENT: But I didn't know it was Hunt.

(Page 104)

DEAN: —to me there was no way

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

DEAN: that, uh—

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

DEAN: But to burden this second Administration

PRESIDENT: We're all in on it.

DEAN: was something that —It's something that is not going to go away.

DEAN: And it seems to me the only way that—

PRESIDENT: Who else, though? Let's, let's leave you and—I don't, I don't, I don't think on the, on, uh, on the obstruction of justice thing—I think that one we can handle. I, I don't know why I fee that way, but I—

DEAN: Well, it is possible that I—

PRESIDENT: I, I think you may be overplaying [. . .]

(Page 105)

DEAN: I think we've got to look—

PRESIDENT: But at the moment, don't you agree that you'd better get the Hunt thing? I mean, that's worth it, at the moment.

DEAN: That, that's worth buying time on, right.

PRESIDENT: And that's buying time on, I agree.

(Page 108)

PRESIDENT: Let me say, though that Hunt [unintelligible] hard line, and that a convicted felon is going to go out and squeal [unintelligible] as we about this [unintelligible] decision [unintelligible] turns on that.

D, No one at the White House has done anything for Vesco.

(Page 201)

D. That is what really troubles me. For example, what happens if it starts breaking, and they do find a criminal case against a Haldeman, a Dean, a Mitchell, and Ehrlichman? That is—

P. If it really comes down to that, we would have to [unintelligible] some of the men.

(Page 202)

D. I know, sir. I can just tell from our conversation that these are things that you have no knowledge of.

P. You certainly can! Buggings, etc. [. . .]

(Page 202)

P. All I know about is the time of I.T.T. he was trying to get something going there because I.T.T. was giving us a bad time.

D. I know he used Hunt.

P. I knew about that.

I didn't know about it, but I knew there was something going on.

But I didn't know it was a Hunt.

(Page 207)

D. [. . .] You know, with me there was no way, but the burden of this second Administration is something that is not going to go away.

(Page 208)

D. And it seems to me the only way—

P. Well, also so let's leave you out of it. I don't think on the obstruction of justice thing—I take that out. I don't know why. I think you may be over that cliff.

D. Well, it is possible.

(Page 209)

D. [. . .] I think we've got to look—

P. But at the moment, don't you agree it is better to get the Hunt thing that's where that—

D. That is worth buying time on.

P. That is buying time, I agree.

(Page 213)

D. [. . .] Let me say (unintelligible) How do we handle all (unintelligible) who know all about this in advance. Let me have some of your thoughts on that.

(Page 109)

PRESIDENT: [. . .] Whether the line is one of, uh, continuing to, uh, run a, try to run at total stonewall, and take the heat from that, uh, there are vulnerable points there; the vulnerable points being that, well the first vulnerable points would be obvious. In other words, it would be if, uh, uh, one of the uh, defendants, particularly Hunt, of course, who is the most vulnerable in my opinion, might, uh, blow the whistle, and he, he— and his price is pretty high, but at least, uh, we should, we should buy the time on that, uh, as I, as I pointed out to John. [. . .]

(Page 110)

PRESIDENT: Fortunately, fortunately, with Chuck it is very—I, I talk to him about many, many political things, but I never talk about this sort of thing 'cause he's, uh, he's very harmful. I mean I don't think — he must be damn sure I don't know anything. And I don't. In fact. I'm rather surprised at what you told me today. From what you said, I gathered the impression, and of course your, your, your analysis does not for sure, uh, indicate that Chuck knew that it was a bugging operation for certain.

(Page 112)

PRESIDENT: That's right, but not—all right. The point is, the point is this, that, uh, it's now time, though, to, uh, that Mitchell has got to sit down, and know where the hell all this thing stands, too. You see, John is concerned, as you know, Bob, about, uh, Ehrlichman, which, uh, worries me a great deal because it's a, uh, it—and it, and this is why the Hunt problem is so serious. uh, because, uh, it had nothing to do with the campaign.

(Pages 114-115)

PRESIDENT: And that means, we got to, we've got to keep it off of you, uh, which I, which I [unintelligible] obstruction of justice thing. We've got to keep it off Ehrlichman. We've got to

Cont'd on Following Page

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keep it, naturally, off of Bob, off Chapin, if possible, and Strachan. Right?

DEAN: Uh huh.

PRESIDENT: And Mitchell. Right?

DEAN: Uh huh.

PRESIDENT: Now.

HALDEMAN: And Magruder, if you can. But that's the one you pretty much have to give up.

(Page 116)

PRESIDENT: The only thing you could do with him would be to parole him for a period of time because of his family situation! But you couldn't provide clemency.

(Page 118)

HALDEMAN: And then they never replenished it, so we just gave it all back anyway.

PRESIDENT: I have a feeling we could handle this one. Well—

DEAN: Well, first of all, they'd have a hell of a time proving it. Uh, that's one thing. Uh—

PRESIDENT: Yeah, yeah—I just have a feeling on it. But let's now come back to the money, a million dollars, and so forth and so on. Let me say that I think you could get that in cash, and I know

(Page 215)

P. [. . .] Whether the line is one of continuing to run—kind of stone wall, and take the heat from that, having in mind the fact that there are vulnerable points there;—the vulnerable points being the first vulnerable points would be obvious. That would be one of the defendants, either Hunt, because he is most vulnerable in my opinion, might blow the whistle and his price is pretty high, but at least we can buy the time on that as I pointed out to John. [. . .]

(Page 218)

P. OK. Fortunately, with Chuck it is very—I talk to him about many, many political things, but I have never talked with him about this sort of thing. Very probably, I think he must be damn sure that I didn't know anything: And I don't. In fact, I am surprised by what you told me today. From what you said, I gathered the impression, and of course your analysis does not for sure indicate that Chuck knew that it was a bugging operation.

(Page 220)

P. The point is this, that it is now time, though, that Mitchell has got to sit down, and know where the hell all this thing stands, too. You see, John is concerned, as you know, about the Ehrlichman situation. It worries him a great deal because, and this is why the Hunt problem is so serious, because it had nothing to do with the campaign. [. . .]

(Page 225)

P. And that means keeping it off you. Herb has started this Justice thing. We've got to keep it off Herb. You have to keep it, naturally, off of

Cont'd on Following Page

Cont'd From Preceding Page

Bob, off Chapin, if possible Strachan, right?

D. Uh, huh.

P. And Mitchell. Right?

D. Uh, huh.

H. And Magruder, if you can.

(Page 227)

P. The only thing we could do with him would be to parole him like the (unintelligible) situation. But you couldn't buy clemency.

(Page 230)

H. They hadn't replenished, so we just gave it all back anyway.

P. I had a feeling we could handle this one.

H. Well, first of all, I would have a hell of a time proving it. That is one thing.

P. I just have a feeling on it. Well, it sounds like a lot of money, a million dollars. Let me say that I think we could get that. I know money is hard to raise. But the point is, what we do on that—Let's look at the hard problem

money is hard, but there are ways. That could be [unintelligible]. But the point is, uh, what would you do on that—Let's, let's look at the hard facts.

(Page 119)

PRESIDENT: Yeah, those fellows. But of course you know, these fellows though, as far as that plan was concerned.

HALDEMAN: But what is there?

PRESIDENT: As far as what happened up to this time, our cover there is just going to be the Cuban Committee did this for them up through the election.

(Page 120)

PRESIDENT: That's right. Just be damned sure you say I don't.

HALDEMAN: Yeah—

PRESIDENT: Remember, I can't recall, I can't give any honest, an answer to that that I can recall. But that's it.

(Page 121)

PRESIDENT: that's why your, for your immediate thing you've got no choice with Hunt but the hundred and twenty or whatever it is. Right?

DEAN: That's right.

PRESIDENT: Would you agree that that's a buy time thing, you better damn well get that done, but fast?

DEAN: I think he ought to be given some signal, anyway, to, to—

PRESIDENT: Yes.

DEAN: Yeah—you know.

PRESIDENT: Well for Christ's sakes get it in a, in a way that, uh—who's, who's going to talk to him? Colson? He's the one who's supposed to know him.

(Page 122)

DEAN: Well, I, uh, I gather LaRue just leaves it in mail boxes and things like that, and tells Hunt to go pick it up. Someone phones Hunt and tells him to pick it up. As I say, we're a bunch of amateurs in that business.

PRESIDENT: Well, the main point, now, is the people who will need the money [unintelligible]. Well of course, you've got the surplus from the campaign. That we have to account for. But if there's any other money hanging around—

(Page 125)

PRESIDENT: But, but my point is, do you ever have any choice on Hunt? That's the point.

DEAN: [Sighs]

PRESIDENT: No matter what we do here now, John.

DEAN: Well, if we—

PRESIDENT: Hunt eventually, if he isn't going to get commuted and so forth, he's going to blow the whistle.

(Pages 125-126)

DEAN: Uh, we don't, it doesn't.

PRESIDENT: Including Ehrlichman's use of Hunt on the other deal?

DEAN: That's right.

PRESIDENT: You'd throw that out?

DEAN: Uh, well, Hunt will go to jail for that too—he's got to understand that.

PRESIDENT: That's the point too. I don't think that—I wouldn't throw that out. I think I would limit it to—I don't think you need to go into every God damned thing Hunt has done.

(Page 231)

P. These fellows though, as far as what has happened up to this time, are covered on their situation, because the Cuban Committee did this for them during the election?

(Page 235)

P. But you can say I don't remember. You can say I can't recall. I can't give any answer to that that I can recall.

(Pages 236-237)

P. That's why for your immediate things you have no choice but to come up with the \$120,000, or whatever it is. Right?

D. That's right.

P. Would you agree that that's the prime thing that you damn well better get that done?

D. Obviously he ought to be given some signal anyway.

P. (Expletive deleted), get it. In a way that—who is going to talk to him? Colson? He is the one who is supposed to know him?

(Pages 237-238)

D. Well, I got it to LaRue by just leaving it in mail boxes and things like that. And someone phones Hunt to come and pick it up. As I say, we are a bunch of amateurs in that business.

(Page 238)

P. Well, of course you have a surplus from the campaign. Is there any other money hanging around?

(Page 242)

P. But my point is, do you ever have any choice on Hunt? That is the point. No matter what we do here now, John, whatever he wants if he doesn't get it—immunity, etc., he is going to blow the whistle.

D. [. . .]—And we don't, it doesn't—

P. (Unintelligible) for another year.

D. That's right.

P. And Hunt would get off by telling them the Ellsberg thing.

D. No Hunt would go to jail for that too—he should understand that.

P. That's a point too. I don't think I would throw that out. I don't think we need to go into everything. (adjective deleted) thing Hunt has done.

(Page 130)

DEAN: Well, there's been a change in the mood—

HALDEMAN: John's point is exactly right, that the erosion here now is going to you, and that is the thing that we've got to turn off, at whatever the cost. We've got to figure out where to turn it off at the lowest cost we can, but at whatever cost it takes.

DEAN: That's what, that's what we have to do.

PRESIDENT: Well, the erosion is inevitably going to come here, apart from anything, you know, people saying that, uh, well, the Watergate isn't a major concern. It isn't. But it would, but it will be. It's bound to be.

DEAN: We cannot let you be tarnished by that situation.

PRESIDENT: Well, I (un-

(Page 249)

H. We should change that a little bit. John's point is exactly right. The erosion here now is going to you, and that is the thing that we have to turn off at whatever cost. We have to turn it off at the lowest cost we can, but at whatever cost it takes.

D. That's what we have to do.

P. Well, the erosion is inevitably going to come here, apart from anything and all the people saying well the Watergate isn't a major issue. It isn't. But it will be. It's bound to.

P. (Unintelligible) has to go out. Delaying is the great danger to the White House area. We don't I say that the White House can't do it. Right?

D. Yes, Sir.

TRANSCRIPTS OF EIGHT RECORDED
PRESIDENTIAL CONVERSATIONS

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-THIRD CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

PURSUANT TO

H. Res. 803

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY TO INVESTIGATE
WHETHER SUFFICIENT GROUNDS EXIST FOR THE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES TO EXERCISE ITS
CONSTITUTIONAL POWER TO IMPEACH

RICHARD M. NIXON

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

MAY-JUNE 1974

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intelligible) also because I—
Although Ron Ziegler has to
go out—They blame the (un-
intelligible), the White House
(unintelligible).

DEAN: That's right.

PRESIDENT: We don't uh,
uh, I say that the White
House can't do it. Right?

HALDEMAN: Yeah.

DEAN: Yes, sir.

MARCH 21, 1973

5:20 to 6:01 P.M.

EOB Office

JOB OFFICE

The President, John Dean, John Ehrlichman
and H. R. Haldeman

(Page 132)

PRESIDENT: But, does, uh, does anybody, uh, really think, really think that really we should do nothing? That's the other, I mean, that's, that's the option, period. If, uh—keep fighting it out on this ground if it takes all summer.

HALDEMAN: Which it will.

PRESIDENT: That's the other thing, whether we're going to, say, to contain the thing.

EHRlichman: Well, we've talked about that. We talked about, uh, possible opportunities in the Senate, that, that may turn up that we don't foresee now. In other words, that you go in and start playing for the odds. Keep trying to put out fires here and there. The problems of the Hunt thing.

(Page 133)

EHRlichman: Well, my, my view is that, that, uh, Hunt's interests lie in getting a pardon if he can. That ought to be, somehow or another, one of the options that he is most particularly concerned about. Uh, his, his indirect contacts with John don't contemplate that at all. Well, maybe they, maybe they contemplate it — but they say there's going

(unintelligible)

PRESIDENT: I know.

HALDEMAN: That's right.

EHRlichman: They think that that's already understood.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: Uh—

PRESIDENT: I mean he's got to get that by Christmas time.

DEAN: That's right [. . .]

PRESIDENT: If that blows.

EHRlichman: If that: blows and, and that's, it seems to me, that the, uh—although at L.E.A.—It obviously is understood, that he has really gone over the ground with his attorney that's in there.

PRESIDENT: However, can he, by talking, uh, get pardoned? Get, get clemency from the court?

PRESIDENT: So then now—so the point we have to, the bridge you have to cut, uh, cross there is, uh, which you've got to cross, I understand, quite soon, is whether, uh, we, uh, what you do about, uh, his present demand. Now, what, what, uh, what [unintelligible] about that?

DEAN: Well, apparently Mitchell and, and, uh, uh.

UNIDENTIFIED: LaRue.

DEAN: LaRue are now aware of it, so they know what he is feeling.

PRESIDENT: True. [Unintelligible] do something.

DEAN: I, I have, I have not talked with either. I think they are in a position to do something, though.

(Page 134)

DEAN: Oh, yeah, Uh, Dwight, for example, now wants a lawyer; Kalmbach has hired himself a lawyer; Colson has retained a lawyer; and now that we've [unintelligible] enough to know that self-protection is setting in.

PRESIDENT: Well, let's not trust them. Surely.

DEAN: Maybe we face the situation.

(Pages 251-252)

P. [. . .] Does anybody really think we can do nothing? That's the option, period. If he fights it out on this ground, it takes all summer.

H. Which it will.

P. That's it, whether or not today at the danger point.

H. Well, we have talked about that. We have talked about possible opportunities in the Senate. Things may turn up that we don't foresee now. Some people may be sort of playing the odds.

E. The problem of the Hunt thing [. . .]

(Page 252)

E. Well, my view is that Hunt's interests lie in getting a pardon if he can. That ought to be somehow or another one of the options that he is most particularly concerned about. Now, his indirect contacts with John don't contemplate that at all—(inaudible)

P. He assumes that's already understood.

D. He's got to get that by Christmas. I understand.

H. That's right [. . .]

(Pages 252-253)

H. If that blows—

E. If that blows and that seems to me, although I doubt if he is understood, he has really turned over backwards since he has been in there. However, can he, by talking, get a pardon? Clemency from the Court? [. . .]?

P. Yeah. And then so the point we have to, the bridge we have to cross there, that you have to cross I understand quite soon, is what you do about Hunt and his present finance? What do we do about that?

D. Well, apparently Mitchell and LaRue are now aware of it so they know how he is feeling.

P. True. Are they going to do anything?

D. Well, I have not talked with either of them. Their positions are sympathetic.

(Page 254)

D. [. . .] Dwight, for example, hired himself a lawyer; Colson has retained a lawyer; and now that we are all starting the self-protection certainly.

P. Maybe we face the situation [. . .]

[Page 135]

PRESIDENT: Yeah. That's right. That's the point. That's why I say I'm, I'm going to take a lot of the heat. [Coughs] Well, we have to realize that. Ah, the attrition is going to be rather considerable. That's your point, isn't it?

DEAN: I think it, it's hard to prevent. Now, that's why I raise the point of, of this immunity concept again. That would take a lot of heat. Obviously, the immunity might —But it also [unintelligible] you find cannot be structured, that you're concerned about, there's something lurking here that has been brought to your attention of recent.

DEAN: Uh, now is the time to get the facts. People have been protecting themselves. Dean couldn't get all the information. People wouldn't give it to him. Uh, there are indications now that there are other things, and you'd like to get all this information and lay it before the public, but it's not going to come out if people are going to go take the Fifth Amendment before a grand jury. It'll never be proved. I—

PRESIDENT: And it isn't going to come out of a committee.

(Page 136)

DEAN: All right, is that, is that better? Or is it better to have, you know, just, just keep going and have the thing build up and all of a sudden collapse? And, and people get indicted and people, uh, get tarnished.

PRESIDENT: After we've stonewalled it?

DEAN: After we've stonewalled it, and after the President's been accused of covering up that way.

PRESIDENT: That's the point.

EHRlichman: Or is there another way?

PRESIDENT: Yeah, like—?

EHRlichman: Like the, the Dean statements, where the President then makes a full disclosure of everything which he then has. And is in a position if it does collapse at a later time to say, "Jesus, I had the F.B.I. and the Grand Jury, and I had my own counsel. I turned over every rock I could find. [. . .]"

PRESIDENT: [. . .] I ask for a, a written report, which I think, uh, that—which is very general, understand. Understand, [laughs] I don't want to get all that God damned specific. I'm thinking now in far more general terms, having in mind the fact that the problem with a specific report is that, uh, this proves this one and that one that one, and you just prove something

(Page 255)

P. Well, that is why I say on this one that we have to realize that the system is going to run and that is your problem.

H. The only problem (inaudible)

D. It is structured. That your concern about. "There is something lurking here." Now is the time to get the facts before Richard Nixon himself.

UNKNOWN: Dean couldn't get all the information. People wouldn't give it to him. There are things, there are a lot of things. And if you would like to get all of this information and you lay it before the public, but it is not going to come because some people go to a Grand Jury and tell the truth.

H. Lie?

P. And it isn't going to come out of the Committee.

(Pages 256-257)

D. Alright, is that better? Or is it better to have (inaudible) and things blow up and all of a sudden collapse? Think about it.

H. After a little time, the President is accused of covering up that way.

P. That isn't the point.

E. Or is there another way?

P. Yeah, like—

E. The Dean statements, where the President then makes a bold disclosure of everything which he then has. And is in a position if it does collapse at a later time to say, "I had the F.B.I. and the Grand Jury, and I had my own Counsel. I turned over every document I could find. (. . .)"

(Page 257)

P. [. . .] I asked for a written report, which I do not have, which is very general understand. I am thinking now in far more general terms, having in mind the facts, that where specifics are concerned, make it very general, your investigation of the case. Not that "this man is guilty, this man is not guilty," but "this man did do

that you didn't do at all. But if you make it rather general in terms of my—your investigation indicates that this man did not do it, this man did not do it, this man did do that. You are going to have to say that, John, you know, like the, uh, Segretti-Chapin—

(Pages 139-140)

EHRlichman: [...] But, uh, beyond that, the question is, did we, did we authorize it, did we condone it.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: Did we

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: Support it? And that kind of thing.

PRESIDENT: And that's that part of it. Getting back to the, uh, getting back to this, John, uh, you still sort of tilt to the panel idea yourself?

PRESIDENT: Strachan. Do the same to him with it.

DEAN: Strachan.

PRESIDENT: Maybe. Not so much.

UNIDENTIFIED: Maybe Jeb.

DEAN: [Unintelligible] I think he has a problem.

PRESIDENT: Ah. The problem of knowledge of it.

HALDEMAN: He has a problem of knowledge. Magruder has a problem of action.

PRESIDENT: Action and perjury.

(Page 143)

EHRlichman: You immediately eliminate one of your options. You can, well, you can eliminate the option of the President being able to taken the position he knew nothing about it.

(Page 145)

EHRlichman: The, the only thing that we can say is for Ziegler to say, "Look, we've investigated backwards and forwards in the White House, and we're satisfied on the basis of the report we have that nobody in the White House has been involved in a burglary; nobody had notice of it, knowledge of it, participated in the planning, or sided or abetted it in any way."

PRESIDENT: Well, that's what you could say.

EHRlichman: And it happens to be true.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: As for that transaction.

PRESIDENT: [Laughs] Sure. As for that transaction.

EHRlichman: Right.

PRESIDENT: Well, John, you, uh, you, uh, you must feel that's uh, is enough.

DEAN: No [unintelligible].

that." You are going to have to say that, John. Segretti (inaudible) [...]

(Page 261)

E. [...] But beyond that, the question is did he completely authorize (inaudible)

P. Yeah. Getting back to this John. You still tilt to the panel idea yourself?

Page 263

P. STRACHAN. This wouldn't do anything to him would it?

D. STRACHAN? I would say yes. About the same as Jeb.

H. Do you think so?

D. Yes. I think he has a problem.

P. What is the problem about?

H. He has a problem of knowledge.

D. Magruder has a problem of action, action and perjury.

(Page 267.)

H. What are your options?

E. Boy, if you could eliminate the option by taking a legal position. You knew nothing about it.

(Page 269)

E. The only thing we can say is that we have investigated it backwards and forwards in the White House, and have been satisfied on the basis of the report we had that nobody in the White House has been involved in a burglary, nobody had notice of it, knowledge of it, participated in the planning, or aided or abetted it in any way. And it happens to be true as for that transaction.

P. John, you don't think that is enough?

D. No, Mr. President.

(The rest of the transcripts was not available for publication in this edition.)