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Haldeman
Pardon Bid
Confirmed

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Lawyers for H. R. (Bob) Haldeman confirmed yesterday that they sent the White House a double-barreled proposal for Watergate pardons from President Nixon hours before he resigned.

The bid for amnesty included two proposed statements for Mr. Nixon to choose from, one proclaiming pardons for all Watergate figures, and one granting amnesty for Vietnam draft evaders as well.

"They were drafted by our office," Haldeman's chief defense lawyer, John J. Wilson, said yesterday. He said Mr. Nixon's chief Watergate lawyer at the White House, James D. St. Clair, called and asked that the package be sent over to the White House on the afternoon of Aug. 8.

Mr. Nixon made his resignation speech that night without mentioning pardons for anyone.

The call from St. Clair to Haldeman's lawyers was apparently prompted by two calls that Haldeman himself had placed to the White House on Aug. 7 and again on Aug. 8.

On both occasions, Wilson said, Haldeman spoke with his successor as Mr. Nixon's White House chief of staff, Alexander M. Haig Jr.

The Washington Post reported Thursday that Mr. Nixon rejected urgent requests for pardons in the closing days of his presidency from both Haldeman and Ehrlichman.

HALDEMAN Quoting informed sources, The Post reported that Mr. Nixon deeply resented the tone of the pleas and especially Haldeman's, which was described by one source as "threatening" and by another as tantamount to blackmail.

Excerpts from the proposed statements drafted by Haldeman's lawyers appeared in yesterday's editions of the Washington Star-News.

Both would have announced the abolition of the Watergate Special Prosecution Force—"subject, of course, to the concurrence" of congressional leaders—since both would have provided unconditional pardons for anyone allegedly involved in "Watergate in its broad sense," including the milk money controversy, the ITT case, the Ellsberg break-in "and any other matter included within the charter granted to the special prosecutor."

Haldeman's lawyers, Wilson and Frank H. Strickler, also sent the White House a one-page legal brief that Strickler drew up on presidential pardon powers and a one-page statement of ideas that Haldeman had jotted down for consideration.

Drafting of the package had started Aug. 7, reportedly with the knowledge of Ehrlichman's lawyers. According to one source Ehrlichman was also said to have contacted Julie Nixon Eisenhower on the night of Aug. 7 to discuss the subject.

Both Haldeman and Ehrlichman refused yesterday to discuss the approaches to Mr. Nixon. Haldeman said he would "have nothing to say about it one way or another."

Ehrlichman said he had no comment and told The Washington Post that he thought it would be "inappropriate to add any fuel to the fire you have started."

Ehrlichman's lawyers have denounced Thursday's story in The Washington Post in a motion protesting pretrial publicity that was formally denied yesterday by U. S. District Court Judge John J. Sirica.

The proposed announcement confined to Watergate figures would have had Mr. Nixon saying he thought it "vitally important that your new President be able to take office with a clean slate, unhampered by Watergate tragedies" and proclaiming unconditional pardons for all "except myself."

The second proposal would have added amnesty for "those who have violated the law with regard to the draft from armed services for the period of the Vietnam war."

Haldeman's notes suggested "this is the one and only chance for a complete end instead of a partial end" to Watergate problems and added that it would solve "the problem of potential prosecutor access to files and tapes by eliminating basis for further prosecution . . ." He said it would also eliminate the need of Watergate defense lawyers to "force access" to the same files.