

TRANSCRIPT OF A RECORDING OF A MEETING
BETWEEN THE PRESIDENT, H.R. HALDEMAN, JOHN
EHRlichMAN AND RONALD ZIEGLER, THE OVAL
OFFICE, APRIL 17, 1973, FROM 12:35 TO 2:20
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PRESIDENT: Where did we come out?

EHRlichMAN: Well, we got two things, we got a, a, a
press plan

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichMAN: ...but it rests upon some decisions...

PRESIDENT: Right.

EHRlichMAN: ...that you have to make on sort of an
action plan.

PRESIDENT: Right, all right.

EHRlichMAN: And, uh, I just finished an hour with Colson
who came over very concerned and said that
he had to see you. That the message that he
bad for you that he had to and wanted to
explain at length is why Dean had to be
dealt with summarily. Uh, his partner has a
tie in with the U.S. Attorney's office and
they seem to know what's going on there.
Very simply put, I think"his-argument will
be that the City of Washington generally
knows that Dean had little or no access to
you. That Haldeman, Colson, and Ehrlichman
had a lot of access to you.

PRESIDENT: True, that's quite right.

EHRlichMAN: That, that...

PRESIDENT: Dean was just a messenger.

EHRlichMAN: ...knowledge imputed to us is knowledge
imputed to you, and if Dean is
(unintelligible) and testifies that he
imputed great quantities of knowledge to
Er-or passed great quantities of knowledge
to us, and is allowed to get away with
that...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: ...that, that will seriously impair the Presidency ultimately. 'Cause it will be very easy to argue -that all you have to do is read Dean's testimony, uh, look at the previous relationships -and there she goes! So, he says the key to this is that Dean should not get immunity. Now, that's, th, that's what he wants to tell you.

PRESIDENT: Well, he told me that, and, uh, I., and I couldn't agree more.

EHRlichman: Now he says you have total and complete control over whether Dean gets immunity...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: ...through Petersen.

PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

EHRlichman: Now that's what he says, and he would be glad to come in and tell you how to do it, why, and all that stuff.

PRESIDENT: I don't want Colson to come in here because...

EHRlichman: (Unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: I just feel that way. I feel uneasy about that, uh, his ties and everything in there, I mean they, uh...I realize that Dean is the candidate, uh. Dean, of course, let's look at what he has, his threats and so forth about, uh, (unintelligible) don't want him to go popping off about, about everything else that has taken place, that he's done in the government, you know, and uh, the buggin' of the...

EHRlichman: Well the question...

(Banging heard in background)

PRESIDENT: Whether they--

EHRlichman: ...the question-is; uh, I suppose which way he is liable to do it most, uh...

PRESIDENT: Well, first of all, if he gets immunity (unintelligible) he's likely to be, uh, (unintelligible). He'll pay just as little price as he can.

EHRlichman: Well, the price is the, the price that he paid, the, that the quid-pro-quo for the immunity is to reach one of the three of us or all of us.

PRESIDENT: Or all of us, so (unintelligible)--just mentioned (unintelligible) just said Colson will not come down to Washington.

EHRlichman: And., uh, the President at uh, uh, and Colson argues that if he is not given immunity, then he has even more incentive to go light upon his own malfactions, and, and, he will have to clam up and he will have to defend himself.

PRESIDENT: Now, when he talked to me I said, uh, "Now I understand you John." I said, "I understand the tactic you know of all three resigning." And I said, "all offered to resign." I told him that, you understand. I told him that you and John had offered to re, uh, resign, and, uh, and so, so he's, he's aware of that.

HALDEMAN: Well, have they told him that the price of his immunity is that if we resign they'll give him immunity? Do, do they feel that makes their case? Or. does he have to give them evidence?

PRESIDENT: I don't know.

HALDEMAN: He's going to have a tough time with that.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) while we here.

EHRlichman: Well, to go on.

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PRESIDENT: All right.

EHRlichman: Now, my, my action plan...

PRESIDENT: What would your plan be?

EHRlichman: My action plan would, would involve, uh...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: Uh, either suspension or firing of Dean in the course of an explanation, a historical explanation of your reliance on the Dean Report it's apparently unre, it's apparent unreliability.

PRESIDENT: But going out, you see, I, the Garment guy got him in today -Garment says the radio is, is gonna get it all so it's all going to come out anyway, he points out that LaRue, Strachan, etc., etc., etc and that's, of course, with the U.S. Attorney's, I mean, what, uh, that's what Petersen's view is, of course.

EHRlichman: What's that? The Garment deal?

PRESIDENT: That is it all going to come out, it's all coming out, and Haldeman and Ehrlichman are going to resign. He told me that on Sunday. He's told me and I asked him again yesterday. I said, "Now, look it. That's pretty God-damned flimsy, you know." He said, "Yes, I'm not talking about legal, uh, exposure. I'm just talking about the fact that as this stuff comes out they're going to be eaten to pi-, eaten alive. The President -eventually the clamour is going to be something you cannot stand." I said, "Better for them to get leave or something of that sort now?" And he said, uh, "This is the government, and I, uh, rather, rather than to, than to sit there and act later as a result of this tid-bit and that tid-bit and so forth -he lied and I don't lie and so forth. Haldeman against Dean and Haldeman against this,

and Ehrlichman against Dean, and Colson, you know, and all that. Who did all the lying?" He said, "Definitely they'll say, "For Christ sake, Mr. President, uh, can't you, can't you let these fellas..." Now that's, that's my point. That's what he said.

EHRlichman: I understand.

PRESIDENT: That's argument that'll be made.

EHRlichman: Yep.

PRESIDENT: He said that to Rogers last night, and that's that, of course, is Garment's argument.

EHRlichman: Um hmmm.

PRESIDENT: And I guess Rose agrees, it's gotta be Rose, or whatever.. My problem at the present time is I just don't want to have to talk to each of those, uh, these, uh, sideline people individually, 'cause I, I don't know. I think some Garment came in and was talking about the Ostrow story in the Times. Petersen told me about it last night. He said Ostrow had called. And I told him, I, "That it must have leaked.out of your place." He said, "No. it didn't." Could it.leaked out of here. Could It have been Garment.

HALDEMAN: Could have been, but doesn't, it isn't at all likely.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: It's a Justice problem.

PRESIDENT: But you see what you say about Dean, I said too much, all three, uh, that, uh. He supports the Garment plan. He's talked to Garment and Garment has talked to Dean.

EHRlichman: Dean, Dean has talked to everybody in this place.

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PRESIDENT: I told him not to talk to him any more. But you see Dean Look, let's see, what the hell what's he got; uh, what's the hell he have with regard to the President? He came and talked to me, as you recall, about the need for \$120,000 for clemencies for us.

EHRlichman: I know, I., I., You told me that the other day, I didn't know that before.

HALDEMAN: But so what?

PRESIDENT: What?

HALDEMAN: So what?

PRESIDENT: I said, how, I said, what in the world, I mean, John, I said John you can't continue on this short notice. What's it cost (unintelligible) I sort of laughed and said, "Well I guess you could get that."

EHRlichman: Now is he holding that over your head? Saying, uh-

PRESIDENT: No., no, no, no, no, I didn't I don't think Dean would go so far as to get into any conversation he had with the President even Dean I don't think.

HALDEMAN: Well, he can't, he's got, he's got you have both executive privilege in conversation with him, and--

PRESIDENT: Executive privilege. Period.

HALDEMAN: And this is in relation to the (unintelligible)

PRESIDENT: Let's just call it, let's just call it executive privilege. Period.

HALDEMAN: Well (unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: But on the other hand you've got to figure that Dean could put out something with somebody else.

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HALDEMAN: But you're not

PRESIDENT: That's the only thing I can think of that he's told me, but I. I've not got him in yet to ask about this thing he said about you Liddy told you.

EHRlichMAN: Oh well.

PRESIDENT: told Petersen and Petersen said (unintelligible).

EHRlichMAN: There'll be one of those a day. I'm sure, from now on.

PRESIDENT: Well, that's the point - the point is can we, can we survive it? Let's face it.

EHRlichMAN: Well--

PRESIDENT: Can Haldeman and Ehrlichman survive it. Uh, the point that I-

(PRESIDENT and EHRlichMAN both speak unintelligible)

PRESIDENT: Let me say this. I know your attitude is a hell of a lot different from, from that John Dean. I know that as far as you're concerned you'll go out and throw yourselves on a God damned sword. I'm aware of that. And I am trying to think the thing through with that, with that in mind, because, God damn it, you're, you're the two most valuable members on the staff. I know that. The problem is, you're the two most loyal and the two most honest.

HALDEMAN: We don't have to go into that crap.

PRESIDENT: You know how I feel about that. It's not crap it's the truth. The problem we got here is this. I do not want to be in a

position where the God-damned public clamour makes, as It did with Eisenhower, with Adams, makes it necessary (unintelligible) calls -to have Bob come in one day and-Bob says "Look, Mr. President, because of the public -blah blah blah blah -I'm going to leave." Now that's the real problem I've got on this God-damned thing, and I don't think that kicking Dean's ass out of here is going to do it.

EHRlichman:

Eh.

PRESIDENT:

I think -Understand, I'm not ruling out kicking his ass out. But I think you got to figure what the hell does Dean know. That he did do. What kind of blackmail does he have? You see, then everything apparently that I don't know what all he does know (unintelligible).

EHRlichman:

Let me make a suggestion.

PRESIDENT:

All right.

EHRlichman:

You've got, you've got Dean coming in saying to you, "I've talked to the U.S. Attorney and I've told him a lot of things that I did wrong."

PRESIDENT:

Right. Right

EHRlichman:

So you put him on leave. He isn't charged with anything yet, but he's said that to you.

PRESIDENT:

He said -I asked him that and he said I'll go on leave with Haldeman and Ehrlichman.

EHRlichman:

Well, he's not in any position to bargain with you on that. Now, uh, when the time comes that I'm charged with anything wrong...

PRESIDENT:

Well, you, John, you have been by a U.S. Attorney and by...

EHRlichman:

All right, all right.

PRESIDENT:

...Petersen to me. Petersen is not charging you legally.

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EHRlichman: Well, that's what I Mean. See, I, I'm me, I understand the difference.

HALDEMAN: (Unintelligible) charged Dean legally.

EHRlichman: That's right.

HALDEMAN: That's the difference.

EHRlichman: You see legally Dean has broken the law on the, on the face of his...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: ...admission to you--

PRESIDENT: Petersen has said to me, he says that there, is, uh, that because of this evidence that has come in here that Haldeman and Ehrlichman should (unintelligible) now I'm faced with that damned hard fact. Now, uh, based on that--

EHRlichman: Well, that takes me to my next step, which is-my continuing misgivings about Petersen. And I'm sorry to be put in the position of having to raise this question in the light of his having said that about me because it's, it makes it a very doubtful kind of a statement, but--

PRESIDENT: How do I feel-about Petersen.

EHRlichman: I don't know, but, but, uh, Just from a personal, selfish standpoint, I would a whole lot rather, that the case were in the control of somebody who would call them right down the middle. That some guy that I know has egg on his face from his previous working with Dean. And I know that out of Dean's mouth. Now -

HALDEMAN: If you, if you have any doubt about that and want it from an unbiased source, call Dick Moore and ask him, because there is no question that **RESTRICTED-"D"** And you have knowledge of that now too.

EHRlichman: Now, I just cannot mat by quietly. If, if I take a leave and I go out of here - I am gonna very vigorously defend myself. And one of the first things I am gonna do is sink Petersen.

HALDEMAN: The first thing is Dean, the second is Petersen.

EHRlichman: Well, Dean sunk himself as far as I'm concerned, but, but I will not have Petersen left in a position to make the prosecutorial decisions, because I just, as sure as I'm sitting here, I, I promise you that he will indict me.

PRESIDENT: Oh, will he?

EHRlichman: Yes, sir, he will, whether there's any evidence or not. He will indict me because it is very much to his interest to do so.

PRESIDENT: God damn it, why was he put in charge of the case?

EHRlichman: Well, I wish he hadn't. I, I thought it was an ad interim thing until, you know, uh, uh, uh, on the basis of your conversation with Kleindienst.

PRESIDENT: Kleindienst said he would step aside and he did.

EHRlichman: Well,

PRESIDENT: So he (unintelligible)

EHRlichman: Okay. But, uh--

PRESIDENT: ...counsel will never give up--

EHRlichman: I just want to, I just want to say to you in the strongest kind of terms that, that, uh, I will have no choice in this matter.

PRESIDENT: That's right.

EHRlichman: And, uh, I'll do it by fair means or foul.

PRESIDENT: I hope so.

HALDEMAN: Well, no because that's gonna hurt too,

EHRlichman: Well...

HALDEMAN: And that's just gonna (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: Hell, Bob.

HALDEMAN: I didn't get that. Hell. I, I'm not arguing that you shouldn't do it. I'm arguing that we should try to avoid getting to the push.

EHRlichman: Oh, I'd love to avoid it.

HALDEMAN: (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: I'd love to avoid it.

HALDEMAN: That's just one more dagger in the whole God damn thing.

EHRlichman: I know. I know.

HALDEMAN: (Unintelligible) that the dagger shouldn't have to be stuck.

PRESIDENT: All right. Get me, get me the action plan (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: Well, step, step...

PRESIDENT: Now, can I ask you to do one, one (unintelligible) silly little (unintelligible)? What in the name of God is going to be said about anything (unintelligible) about that, about that packet of papers? How's that end up -that Gray's a liar? Is that what it adds up to (unintelligible)?

EHRlichman: He's either a liar or he's an obstructor-- one or the other.

PRESIDENT: Or both.

EHRlichman: Or both.

PRESIDENT: Because something given to him.

EHRlichman: No question about that.

PRESIDENT: You saw.

EHRlichman: Yes, sir. I did. I was standing right there.

PRESIDENT: Who gave it to him?

EHRlichman: John Dean handed it to him in my presence at my office.

PRESIDENT: What did John say? This is a politically sensitive--

EHRlichman: That, "Here the, here's this material from Hunt's safe."

PRESIDENT: Did he say it was politically sensitive (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: No, sir. Not in my, uh, not that I can recall. He just said, "Here--

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) heard the word hot political stuff.

EHRlichman: I, I told you about a previous conversation where it was described to me in those terms.

PRESIDENT: By Dean.

EHRlichman: I think so. I think so.

HALDEMAN: That's precisely what Dean's told me after the fact had sprung out.

EHRlichman: Hmmm. See you get that in. So you don't get immunity.

PRESIDENT: Colson thinks that I can order him not to give immunity.

EHRlichman: Right.

PRESIDENT: And tell him. Then, then he would say, "Well, what are you going to do about Haldeman and Ehrlichman?"

EHRlichman: Well (unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: What could I say?

EHRlichman: What you have to...

HALDEMAN: He doesn't have to say that.

EHRlichman: ...say is nobody...

PRESIDENT: Yes, he does.

EHRlichman: I think, what you have to say is nobody in this White House...

PRESIDENT: Dean isn't going to say it. I mean-- Petersen--Petersen's the guy that can give immunity.

HALDEMAN: Well, tell him not to give us immunity either.

PRESIDENT: How? That's a problem. Now, come on!

HALDEMAN: Well, see, it's none of this business whether you suspend us or not. That's your decision.

PRESIDENT: I know it is. I know it is. But the point is -Let me put it candidly. If I do not suspend you, he will probably give him immunity. That's the problem, I think if I (unintelligible) unbearable. If you do take a leave, I think he will--it's very, it's possible--well, it's possible that, even if you do leave--that he would still give Dean immunity.

EHRlichman: I agree.

PRESIDENT: Because Dean is the, Dean is the guy that he's got to use for the purpose of making cases.

HALDEMAN: Yes, but even Ehrlichman, which he already admits he doesn't have a case on - Petersen thought he had significance.

PRESIDENT: Well, we got in deep. He says that, he says that, legally, yes he does, In, in, in the case of Haldeman, it'll, I discuss -, the Strachan things have been determined from a lot to do with with, uh, with, uh, what Strachan says and what Kalmbach says, you know, uh, it's a 350 thing and th, that sort of thing.

HALDEMAN: Kalmbach has no relation to me on that.

EHRlichMAN: That ah -

PRESIDENT: Have you thought when you say before -it gets to the tangential thing out of the way. Have you given any thought to what the line ought to be I, I don't mean a lie but a line, on raising the money for these defendants? Because both of you were aware that was going on, you see the, the raising of money you were aware of it, right?

UNIDENTIFIED: Yes, sir.

PRESIDENT: And you were aware--You see, you can't go in and say I didn't know what in hell he wanted the 350 for. You could say, uh-

HALDEMAN: No I've given a great deal of thought. I've got what I've written down.

UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah.

PRESIDENT: Well, I wonder. I'm not, I'm not, I'm not look I'm, I'm concerned about the legal thing, Bob, and so forth. Uh, what - You, you say that our purpose was to keep them from talking to the press.

EHRlichMAN: Well, that was my purpose, I, uh, uh - And before I get too far out on that, uh, I want to talk to an attorney and find out what the law is - which I have not yet done.

PRESIDENT: Right!

HALDEMAN: That's just what I want to do too. Uh, this is

PRESIDENT: That's right.

HALDEMAN: ...only a draft.

PRESIDENT: That's right. Well, good. The only point is I, I think it's not only that but, you, you see that involves all of our people.

HALDEMAN: That's what, that's what I feel it involves Kalmbach -

UNIDENTIFIED: Well.

PRESIDENT: And as to what the hell Kalmbach was told.

EHRlichMAN: Mr. President, uh, when, when the...

PRESIDENT: I (unintelligible)

EHRlichMAN: ...truth and fact of this is known, that building next door is full of people who knew that money was being raised for these people.

PRESIDENT: EOB?

EHRlichMAN: Yes, sir.

PRESIDENT: Yup.

EHRlichMAN: Just full of them.

PRESIDENT: Many who knew, but there were not so many actors. In other words, there's a difference between actors and novices.

EHRlichMAN: Okay. Well, apparently not, because I'm not an actor, uh--

HALDEMAN: Neither am I. The question there is the testimony, I suppose.

PRESIDENT: I said I, I'm not trying to make any case

EHRlichman: No, but I just want you to think

PRESIDENT: I'm not stating a case.

EHRlichman: I want you to think very critically about the difference here between knowledge of the general transactions going on, on the one hand,

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: ...and being an affirmative actor on the other, because that's-the difference between Dean and me.

PRESIDENT: That's right.

EHRlichman: Now, uh, on this business of whether Dean should have immunity, I think you have to ask yourself really, the basic question, whether anybody in the White House who does wrong, ought to get immunity, no matter how many other people be implicates. Uh, the--

PRESIDENT: Stracban included?

EHRlichman: Anybody anybody. I just question whether in the orderly administration of justice, it looks right for anybody in the White House to get immunity.

PRESIDENT: I could call Petersen in and basically I'm trying to identify that myself. I've got to get this public statement out by three o'clock -is that right?

EHRlichman: Right.

HALDEMAN: But if we're not - Well, yes, but if you don't have to.

EHRlichman: Now, but look--

PRESIDENT: Well, Garment says we have to
(unintelligible).

HALDEMAN: Well, (unintelligible) Garment said it
yesterday, the day before, and the week
before that? Garment (unintelligible)...

PRESIDENT: He had his hands full

HALDEMAN: ...every time a crowd goes, so, uh...

PRESIDENT: Well, understand, I'm not panicking myself,
but they tell me that there, there seems to
be a considerable feeling that, uh, the,
uh...

EHRlichman: Well, I agree with you, but I think what we
should do...

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) LaRue's been called,
Strachan's been called, and Dean's, D, Dean
might put up a story of the Times. You
never know. You know, named, uh, Haldeman
and Ehrlichman...

EHRlichman: Yeah, but you see it's typical.

PRESIDENT: That's right.

EHRlichman: Dean position now...

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible)

EHRlichman: Now-if Dean is treated different from us, he
will go out and say, "I'm a scapegoat for
higher, higher-ups."

HALDEMAN: That figures 'cause he knows Ostrow because
Ostrow is the guy that covers Justice.

PRESIDENT: I see And, uh, uh, Petersen told me
that. He told about, uh, conversations with
--that the wife of Jurgen apparently sat at
some table with a (unintelligible) libber
they addressed, and the top guy, Rosenblatt,
or something like that, at the Post was
talking to somebody else on that staff,
(unintelligible)

PRESIDENT: "The President ought to get out in front,
(CONTINUED): and, uh, uh, uh, uh, uh, we, we've got a
hell of a lot more than we're we've just
held it back;" Now, they may be bluffing I -
would doubt that they are at this point.

HALDEMAN: I think they probably have more, but I would
guess what they have more of is, is, is, in
the Committee. I don't think they got much
more in the White House, unless, I don't
know what it could be unless they got Colson
stuff that would be the only area.

PRESIDENT: Colson's activities?

HALDEMAN: Yeah, that's the only area where you have
any jeopardy in the White House.

PRESIDENT: I doubt - Let me say with regard to Colson,
John, I think it's very - You could say that
I'm way ahead of them on that, that I've got
the message on that and that he feels that
Dean But, uh, but believe me I've been
thinking about that all day yesterday this
whether, uh, Dean should be given immunity.

EHRlichman: Well, the thing that, uh, that specifically-

PRESIDENT: The point is, I, I know that it can happen,
but I can call Petersen in and say he cannot
be given immunity, but nobody on the White.
House staff can be given immunity. And I
whether he'll carry that order out is that,
that's going to be an indicator that that's
the Dean has evidence to hold. And then
what do I say about Dean. Do I tell him
that he goes?

EHRlichman: Well see, the thing that precipitated
Colson's coming over is that...

PRESIDENT: He was (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: ...and he found that No, no, he found that
Dean is still here. You see, Dick Howard
called Chuck...

PRESIDENT: Uh huh.

EHRlichman: ...and went through that business of the FBI men sending him into the arms of Dean.

PRESIDENT: That's right. That's right.

EHRlichman: So, Colson called and says you've got an aspat your bosom over there.

PRESIDENT: That's right.

EHRlichman: And so, uh, today he checked again, apparently with Howard, and discovered Dean is still here and he called and said, "I've got to see you." And he came in and he said, "You guys are just out of your minds," and said, "I want to see the President." And he was just fit to be tied about it, so...

PRESIDENT: Colson was?

EHRlichman: Yeah, because he thinks, having, being (unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: But you see if I say, "Dean, why don't you leave today," why he'd go out and say, "Well the President's covering up for Enrlichman and Haldeman," all right. There you are. Because he knows what I know. That's what he said he would say. I tried to put the I mean, I, I'm trying to look and see where, John - What the hell we are really up against. You said no first it was Liddy who was the scapegoat, now John Dean is.

HALDEMAN: Well, the answer to that is that the President, if he says it publicly, is that the President is, is not covering up for anybody, and will not tolerate any cover-up.

PRESIDENT: But the way he's put it, the way he's put it to me, why, very cute, very cute, as I have said, said, "I'd like for you to give me some resignations." I said, "I'd like to

PRESIDENT: "rewrite it so it doesn't (unintelligible)"

(CONTINUED): he re-wrote it in a way that says: uh. "In view of what you have told me that, uh, that Haldeman and Ehrlichman are willing to resign, and so forth, you know what I mean, de, de, de, de, too, will resign." In other words, he basically put the shoe on the other...

HALDEMAN: Shit.

PRESIDENT: ...which of course is what led me to the conclusion that that's exactly what I thought that his attorneys told him to do. If he can get Haldeman and Ehrlichman, that some way gets him, gets him in the picture. (Unintelligible). That's what you have here.

EHRlichman: Yeah, because then that will be argued back to the U.S. Attorney, "Well you see, the President thought enough of Dean's charges to let these guys go." (Unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: Well, I...

EHRlichman: (Unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: I was trying to indicate to him that both of you had indicated a willingness to--in the event--that--you know what I mean.

EHRlichman: And I said, uh, uh, uh, and here's a guy that comes in and in effect confesses to you the commission of crimes.

PRESIDENT: And charges you.

EHRlichman: And charges us.

PRESIDENT: That's right. And I said, "Now wait, these charges" -I said, "These charges are not uh --", and you see he also has an alibi in the U.S. Attorney...

EHRlichman: Small wonders.

PRESIDENT: He was asked that, uh (unintelligible/**REMOVED**) Assistant Attorney General has said that, uh, the President should act--

EHRlichman: Well, you see my, you see my point and, Uh-

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: And you'd have to obviously, call us when

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: As, as--

PRESIDENT: Go ahead. Go ahead on the action
(unintelligible) - first (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: Well, it would involve, it would involve Dean's suspension because it would involve a recounting of how you happened to get into the personal investigation of this by reason of Dean's being unable to reduce his report, his full report to writing for you. And that rang a bell, then, and you personally turned to and have spent a great deal of your time in the last several weeks on this, have, uh, seen dramatic progress in the Grand Jury in the last several days. That would be, that would be Step One. Now in addition to that you would say the Ervin Committee has, uh, come up with, uh, a good set of ground rules which do provide us with--

PRESIDENT: Well, did you work that.out?

EHRlichman: Well, uh, you'd say this. I think you're gonna find that they are going to go on television under oath, uh, pretty much regardless but, the ground rules give you a toe hold. They do provide for Executive Session.

PRESIDENT: Is Executive Session considered executive privilege?

EHRlichman: And they will consider executive privilege...

PRESIDENT: And they will consider executive privilege...Right. And otherwise they will go on television. They, they will go into open hearings.

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EHRlichman: Yes.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: But there again executive privilege is reserved.

PRESIDENT: Executive privilege is to be reserved, fine.

EHRlichman: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: At this point, the way we're in the soup now, we can lose nothing by going out (unintelligible)

PRESIDENT: That's right.

HALDEMAN: I think we may gain.

PRESIDENT: That's right, I couldn't agree more. So if you can prepare me with at least that, that much, I'll agree. That I can say that today.

HALDEMAN: Well, that's a hell of a bomb shell just right there.

PRESIDENT: Yes, uh, it is. But that's our knowledge of it, John. 14'iiat's the rest of it?

EHRlichman: That's it. That's all I have for today. But it gets you into the case gets you leading it. It notices the progress and the Grand Jury as related to your efforts and it doesn't say what they are.

PRESIDENT: Well, the point is, though, that the story today is that, th John Dean is suspended, but, uh and then John Dean is going to be out there blasting the shit--out of uh, saying the President has indicate that, uh, Haldeman and Ehrlichman too might go

HALDEMAN: I didn't say that.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible)

HALDEMAN: All right. Let me suggest a different process, which is that you instruct, that, that you don't

PRESIDENT: The U.S. Attorney.

HALDEMAN: ...that you don't suspend John Dean, but that you instruct John Dean that he is not to come to work any more. He is to stay He is in effect suspended, but not publicly suspended.

PRESIDENT: That's right. He'll say, "What about Haldeman and Ehrlichman?"

HALDEMAN: I would suggest to you that you do the same with us. And I was going to suggest that I was going to request th-, that action -

PRESIDENT: Well.

HALDEMAN: Anyway, for this reason I am going to start speaking for myself. John's got to speak for himself. I have now concluded that my course is that I must put out my story.

PRESIDENT: Right.

HALDEMAN: I must put it out in total and in my words...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: ...before I go to the...

EHRlichMAN: (Unintelligible)

HALDEMAN: (Unintelligible) I don't know about the Grand Jury before I...

PRESIDENT: Before you go to the Senate Committee?

HALDEMAN: ...go to the Senate Committee. Because if I'm going to have to put it out there anyway.

PRESIDENT: I don't think you're ever going to get to the Senate Committee. I don't think the Committee Hearings will ever go forward.

HALDEMAN: I do. I don't think there is any chance of their not going forward.

PRESIDENT: Probably not.

HALDEMAN: You think because of legal case and all that.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible)...Senator Ervin (unintelligible)

HALDEMAN: Okay. That's great if they don't. Then maybe I never tell my story. But my view is that at some point in time I'm going to have to tell it.

PRESIDENT: But you...

HALDEMAN: The way I (unintelligible)...

PRESIDENT: I would reserve, Bob, the right to tell that story until you felt you did have to go to the Committee Hearings. See what I mean? or, unless you got...

HALDEMAN: Till a partial (unintelligible)...

PRESIDENT: ...to a point where you were nibbled to death.

HALDEMAN: That's right. Or until a partial charge comes up. For instance, if the Grand Jury leaks...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: ...or the Justice people leak the Strachan stuff...

PRESIDENT: That's right.

HALDEMAN: ...then, I have, then that forces my hand.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) John?

EHRlichman: Well, subject to, uh, an attorney's advice.

HALDEMAN: Well, now, that's the next point was going to say. I will not make this statement until I have cleared...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: ...and worked it, worked it out.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) Bill said he doesn't have anything to do to (unintelligible).

HALDEMAN: Well, we've got some leads we're going to start on today, so...

PRESIDENT: Great.

HALDEMAN: ...we've got that, but I want -My interest is served and, and I will also argue that, that the better off I come out of this, the better off you come out of it -vis-a-vis me. In other words, anything I do to my interest is to your interest.

PRESIDENT: Let me ask you this, John.
(Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: What's that?

PRESIDENT: You said that you ought to, you ought not to come for awhile. Uh, on what, what, what, what basis? In other words, I don't, we do this on an oral basis.

HALDEMAN: What I'm doing now is requesting you, on an oral basis...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: ...to not expect me to carry out any duties for awhile...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: ...because...

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

HALDEMAN: ...(unintelligible) perfect this and get it ready.

PRESIDENT: Where will you do it, at home, or we can do it at the office here.

HALDEMAN: I can do it wherever, wherever you want me to.

EHRlichman: Well, I think it'd be a mis--I ought to do it in the office, but I don't--

PRESIDENT: All right.

HALDEMAN: I don't think...

EHRlichman: If Dean wants it public (unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: I (unintelligible) Dean backs out of here (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: All right. Let me suggest that--If Dean says, "What about Haldeman and Ehrlichman?" You just say, "John, I'm talking to you about you."

PRESIDENT: All right.

EHRlichman: "Now, I'll take care of them in my own way. I'm not going to have you bargaining with me."

HALDEMAN: I don't think you can...

EHRlichman: Well...

HALDEMAN: I guess (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: I don't know, I don't know how much of a bind we're in.

HALDEMAN: That's easy. I, I'm not saying - I don't -- think the President can be in the position of making a deal With John Dean on anything.

EHRlichman: Yeah. "I'll go if, if, uh, they go." Supposing I said, "I won't go unless, uh, uh, Henry Kissinger goes!" Yeah, uh, it's ridiculous. Uh, here - Let me speak to this. I have pretty much unplugged myself of my day-to-day stuff...

PRESIDENT: Sure, that's all right.

EHRlichman: ...because.this, with this kind of thing going on you just can't think about anything else.

PRESIDENT: Oh, of course, it's been a little hard for me to also.

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EHRlichman: Uh, sure. Now, uh, I have a need to get into all kinds of records

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: ...and my date books...

PRESIDENT: Right.

EHRlichman: ...and these are volumes and volumes of correspondence...

PRESIDENT: Right. Right.

EHRlichman: ...and stuff. If I couldn't come into the office, I probably couldn't prepare a defense.

PRESIDENT: What about Dean coming in? Why not him? Why, why, why, why the hell doesn't Dean come into the office (unintelligible)? I don't think I think because, uh, I've told Dean he's to have nothing more to do with this case.

EHRlichman: Well, he's sure not, he's sure not following out your orders, if that's the case, uh,...

PRESIDENT: You see what I mean.

EHRlichman: Now, you'd have another problem...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: ...and I don't know what's been going on in the last week or so, but I imagine he's carted stuff out of here by the bale.

PRESIDENT: Well, that's (unintelligible)

EHRlichman: I, I just don't know.

HALDEMAN: You, you don't know that.

EHRlichman: I, I certainly...

HALDEMAN: If you suspend him or, or, uh, tell him to leave in any way, you also gonna move in to get, take, take care of his files.

PRESIDENT: Could I say this, John I would say that "Haldeman and Ehrlichman have both requested the opportunity to be relieved of their duties - Uh, I mean their main duties, so that they can concentrate, concentrate on this matter to prepare for their appearance before the Grand Jury." Could I say that?

EHRlichman: It's true. It's true.

PRESIDENT: Then, I'd say, "John, uh, I want to relieve you of all your duties so that you can concentrate on your appearance before the Grand Jury.

EHRlichman: Well...

PRESIDENT: Now, wait a minute, wait a minute.

EHRlichman: Sure, I, I, I, I don't--if that's...

HALDEMAN: Well, the trap you're falling into there.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

HALDEMAN: ...is that you're admitting to Dean that you regard the allegations that he has raised against us as of the same validity as his own criminal admission to you.

EHRlichman: I maybe do, and if that's the case then that's what you should say.

PRESIDENT: No, no, no.

EHRlichman: If it is...

PRESIDENT: No. I don't, I don't (unintelligible), there are two different levels.

EHRlichman: Alright. Then, then that's the way it ought to be put.

PRESIDENT: That's right.

EHRlichman: He's brought in a bunch of a bunch of silly garbage about me which doesn't add up to to a nickel's worth of a law suit. Uh, he's come in and told you that he's been involved in all kinds of stuff. It seems to me a very different qualitative kind of, uh, uh, of, uh problem. Here again I hate to argue my case here.

PRESIDENT: Whether it's, whether its...

EHRlichman: I., I just...

PRESIDENT: Whether it's...

EHRlichman: I just uh -very awkward.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: I., uh, well.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) God-damn it.
 (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: No, I shouldn't, I uh, I ought to...

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) The problem I've got here is whether I can try myself uh, uh...

EHRlichman: Well,

PRESIDENT: I, I can (unintelligible) this business about the when I said, "Look John, uh," I said, "both Haldeman and Ehrlichman have offered to resign."

EHRlichman: Well, I offered to resign at your total and sole discretion. You don't have to have a reason.

PRESIDENT: That's right, and I said, and I said, "They have all, both said that?' And I said, ".I will certainly, uh, have better consideration"

EHRlichman: And, uh, and now, there's another matter.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: Uh, if this is awkward for you, hell, the best thing you could do is get rid of me...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: ...you know, once and for all.

PRESIDENT: Yep.

EHRlichman: But if it is anything, if it's anything short of that...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: ...then it seems to me that you have to take into account the qualitative differences.

PRESIDENT: Yep.

EHRlichman: And if you don't want to make a formal suspension of Dean, then the thing to say to him is, "I want you to stay away from the office."

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: "Just don't come around, because I know everything that happens in this building is being funneled directly to the U.S. Attorney through you, or I have reason to think that, and I cannot have that situation." (Pause) Now that's, that's the way-I put it. I-don't know what...

PRESIDENT: I agree.

EHRlichman: ...previous commitment to him is, but he's not being fired, and he's not being suspended.

PRESIDENT: Right. Right. Right.

EHRlichman: He's being directed to stay away from the office.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) you tell him. Because of the fact that you are talking to a U.S. Attorney. I don't know. If I could put it that way to him, I might be able to make some, make some hay.

EHRlichman: Now, if

PRESIDENT: Bring the U.S. Attorney in. And I'll say don't give him immunity.

EHRlichman: Not just from a public policy standpoint.

PRESIDENT: Yep.

EHRlichman: Is this, uh. Well--

PRESIDENT: And I would say he wouldn't try to because I'll tell you what Petersen did tell me, which does say it, it says, when -he said, I said, "What about Dean?", and he said, "Well., we haven't made a deal with him yet."

EHRlichman: Um hum.

PRESIDENT: I think I told you about this--

EHRlichman: Yep.

PRESIDENT: I said, "Why didn't you make deal?" And he said, "Well, uh," he said, and I, "Because he didn't want to (unintelligible)." And I, I said, "What do you mean you let him off?" "Well", he said, "that's what you do, Mr President." I said, "Well," I said, "you're talking to the Senate for lies." We've had some real good talks.

EHRlichman: Yeah.

PRESIDENT: Pretty fresh. And I set down my (unintelligible) Mr. Rogers. Rogers just shook his head and said, "Jesus Christ" he said, "I escape them (unintelligible)." And I said, "All right."

EHRlichman: Well...

PRESIDENT: Now, wait, wait, wait a minute, wait a minute. Then Petersen, he said, "We've got to have corroborative testimony." So you see what I mean?

EHRlichman: Yep.

PRESIDENT: Uh, before we could get, uh--Let me put it this way. He realizes that before he could get, try to give Dean immunity, he's got to have corroborative testimony on the value of Dean's evidence, and that's what he's trying to get at the present time. That's why he was calling Strachan, Colson, Kalmbach, et al. The purpose of it being, John, to get corroborative evidence that would say, "Well, Dean's evidence is so valuable insofar as other people are concerned, that we can, therefore, give him immunity. Uh, now I'm not a criminal lawyer, but does that make any sense?

EHRlichman: I don't know. I, I don't know.

PRESIDENT: But you see what his tactic is?

EHRlichman: Yes.

PRESIDENT: So he isn't going to do it simply on the basis he isn't, he isn't giving Dean immunity simply on the basis of what Dean has already said.

EHRlichman: I understand. Uh, my my fear here is that...

PRESIDENT: Dean getting immunity?

EHRlichman: Uh, Dean getting immunity or anybody in the White House getting immunity.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: It is in itself treatable as a cover-up. And obviously if we are put in a position of defending ourselves...

PRESIDENT: Right. Right.

EHRlichman: ...the things that I'm going to have to say about Dean...

PRESIDENT: Go ahead.

EHRlichman: ...are: That basically Dean was the sole proprietor of this project;

PRESIDENT: Um hum.

EHRlichman: And that he reported-to the President, he reported to me only incidentally, and that (unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: Reported to the President?

EHRlichman: Yes, sir. I would, I would have to say that because...

PRESIDENT: When?

EHRlichman: Well, I don't know when, uh, but he point is...

PRESIDENT: The problem that you've got there is that Dean--Dean does have a point there which you've got to realize. He didn't see me when he came out to California. He didn't see me until the day you said, "I think you ought to talk to John Dean."

EHRlichman: Yep.

PRESIDENT: I think that was in March.

EHRlichman: All right.

PRESIDENT: And (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: But, but, but the point is that basically he was in charge of this project.

PRESIDENT: He'll say he reports to the President through other people.

EHRlichman: Well, okay. Then, then you see what you've got there is an imputation. He says then as that kind of a foundation "I told Ehrlichman that Liddy did it." What he is saying is that, "I told the President, through Ehrlichman, that Liddy did it."

HALDEMAN: Which means that it was privileged knowledge as far as Ehrlichman was concerned and there was nothing that you were required to do about it anyway.

EHRlichman: That's right. But, uh, uh, you see I get, I get into a very funny defensive position then vis-a-vis you and vis-a-vis him, and it's very damned awkward. And I haven't thought it clear through. I don't know where we come out.

PRESIDENT: Yeah. Yeah. You see Dean's Dean's little game here, as I know, Dean doesn't, doesn't belong here. This staff, uh, for whatever reasons, this staff has been so God damned good. I mean, of course he didn't report to me I was a little busy, and I didn't think you, all of you would (unintelligible) tells you, but "Let's let Dean handle that and keep his ankle out of the President's office. If we want the President; we can get him for other reasons too."

EHRlichman: Well, I was busy

PRESIDENT: But he did.

EHRlichman: Well, the case I'm going to make--

PRESIDENT: Well, of course, he would then say, "Who the hell did he report to?"

EHRlichman: Well, he in. many cases, to no one. He just went ahead and did things.

HALDEMAN: That's right.

PRESIDENT: Well, the other point is, the other point is that they'll say that, uh (unintelligible) reported to the President, and, uh, the first time he reported to the President was when, when, when, when, you know when.

EHRlichman: Well, statistically, it's interesting. Uh, I, I'm now far enough into my records for last year.

PRESIDENT: Did you have five meetings a month?

EHRlichman: I. - uh Less than that. And matched against that, all the other things I was doing, and substantive things.

PRESIDENT: I know. I know.

EHRlichman: And the Dean becomes practically the least of my worries.

PRESIDENT: How about you, Bob?

HALDEMAN: I haven't any idea. I don't have a one.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: Unless that Dean does.

PRESIDENT: We'll have to push the button. Dean - The only thing he doesn't have is the fact that he should have come in to see me. Ziegler can talk to him, I guess, and so forth and so on.

EHRlichman: And Moore frequently.

PRESIDENT: Moore.

EHRlichman: Yep.

PRESIDENT: All right. All right. Moore is, uh, supposed to tell me about it, but I haven't talked to Moore either, have I?

EHRlichman: Well, uh, I think, uh, uh, this, this -

PRESIDENT: Dean (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: I've got to think this through. I, uh, I just don't know where that leads.

PRESIDENT: The point that we make, is, uh, is uh, he, uh, White House staff, and John Dean -John Dean's highly sensitive information about the President. Well, God-damn it, John Dean's highly sensitive information was on only one count. Believe me guys we all know. Well, th, th, th, .th, th, the cracky stuff regarding Bob -uh, uh, Strachan-that's, that's just got to be, be worked out. I don't, I don't know how the hell that's going to work out, John, I mean, uh. Bob, did Strachan (unintelligible) this, this idea of -Did Strachan have a, have the plan? And uh, uh, what, uh, what, uh, what, what he says about whether he did have a plan -whether he did show it to you-- remains to be seen.

HALDEMAN: He apparently...

PRESIDENT: Huh?

HALDEMAN: ...says he did not (unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: All right. The other point is, is whether Strachan got information. Now that is the stuff, stuff that is clearly identifiable, according to Petersen, as being telephonic taps. Uh, Strachan will probably say, "No, it was not." And, uh, so, that's that.

HALDEMAN: The interesting thing is--

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible)...where's there's discrepancy...

HALDEMAN: The discrepancy between Strachan and Magruder is because what Strachan got, which he said could have been from that, and it turns out it wasn't. It was with something else.

PRESIDENT: I know. I just (unintelligible).

HALDEMAN: When they got that, they'll get an interesting new problem, because Strachan would say it was, uh, Operation GEMSTONE, not Operation SEDAN CHAIR -and GEMSTONE wasn't Watergate, so that will then uncover the fact that there was something else that they did. I don't know what it was.

PRESIDENT: Was it something else, you mean?

HALDEMAN: I gues, 'cause there was an Operation GEMSTONE that Strachan got reports on.

PRESIDENT: They tell me that GEMSTONE was used for all these operations. That was the code word for everything.

HALDEMAN: Oh.

PRESIDENT: GEMSTONE's for everything.

HALDEMAN: I though SEDAN CHAIR too was the, was the Watergate.

PRESIDENT: Well, I didn't know that.

HALDEMAN: Okay. Then if GEMSTONE is-.the total thing, then, then...

PRESIDENT: I see

HALDEMAN: ...what's--What he got was reported from had And it said confidential sources indicated that -It did not clearly.identify.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: According to Strachan, right?

PRESIDENT: Right, Right, Right.

HALDEMAN: I can't tell you anything else.

PRESIDENT: I, uh, just (unintelligible) I want, want you to know it's uh, without -I want you to know everything he told me you know, you know. I guess we'll see.

HALDEMAN: All right.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) John, I'm just trying to see what the options are on Dean--

EHRlichman: (Unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: What we turn loose here.

EHRlichman: (Unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: ...this god-damned (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: Well, uh, let's go back to the press plan. Maybe that will give us some guidance.

PRESIDENT: Right. Right. Right.

EHRlichman: If you say in the press plan, "The President got concerned about this, "the question, "Why didn't he get concerned sooner because this has been in the papers for months and months?" Well, "the reason he didn't get concerned sooner is he was resting secure in the belief that he had the whole story."

PRESIDENT: Right.

EHRlichman: All right. Well, wha, what made him insecure.

PRESIDENT: Did I ever, did I ever call Dean in and ask him? The answer is no.

EHRlichman: No, but, th, th, the point is that you, you had, you were resting secure on his assurances.

PRESIDENT: To whom? Go ahead.

EHRlichman: Well

HALDEMAN: Didn't, didn't you at some point get a report from Dean that nobody in the White House was involved?

EHRlichman: Didn't we put that out way back in August?

HALDEMAN: Yep.

PRESIDENT: I mean, I just, uh, they, uh, they put that out and I said, "Well, that's all I know, now." But, uh, it was never in writing.

HALDEMAN: No. That's correct. Now that does say...

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) calls, but he never came in orally and told me. I mean, I--

HALDEMAN: He did.

PRESIDENT: I can see who would jeopardize Dean John Dean I never saw about this matter. You better check, but I don't think John Dean was ever seen about this matter until until I saw him, you know, uh, when John Ehrlichman suggested he better call Dean.

EHRlichman: You better check, Bob, back in that period of time in July, when we were in San Clemente, 'cause my recollection is that he did come and see you at that time, but we can check that.

PRESIDENT: Oh.

EHRlichman: Anyway.

PRESIDENT: By himself? No.

EHRlichman: Well, by himself or with one of us.

PRESIDENT: Yes.

EHRlichman: I don't know. But in any event...

PRESIDENT: He may have come in, but it was a pretty, uh,...

EHRlichman: let's follow out.

PRESIDENT: I think he got -I hope he did, hope he did. But, uh, then he might have come in sort of the end, and someone said, "Look, here's John Dean, just in from Washington," and I said, "Thanks for all your hard work." (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: Well, let's follow out this line and see where it leads us.

PRESIDENT: All right.

EHRlichman: The President rested secure in the, in the belief that his Counsel had investigated this and had assured him that nobody in the White House was involved. Okay, then what moved him off of that belief and assurance? Well, what moved him off was the sequence of events leading to John Dean being sent to Camp David to write it all down.

PRESIDENT: What moved him off first were reports that occurred in the court testimony.

EHRlichman: That's right. All right.

PRESIDENT: The charges were made by McCord, and other charges that were, that, that, that -- The charges were made by McCord, Uh, I, I wouldn't say we're taking all sorts of people who were charged under The charges were made by McCord, uh, uh, that, in open, before the Ervin Committee. It's evident the President ordered a full press investigation.

EHRlichman: Well, uh, the first thing you did and maybe you can avoid saying this but you're saying you ordered a full press investigation - Uh, when, when Dean came back...

PRESIDENT: Right.

EHRlichman: ...and said to Bob,...

PRESIDENT: I told him (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: "I can't write that down."

PRESIDENT: He told me that too.

EHRlichman: Then, I'd write.

PRESIDENT: That Dean spoke to me.

EHRlichman: I just told you. Then that rang the bell, because if Dean can't write that down, then we must have problems bigger than I ever thought we did.

PRESIDENT: Sure.

EHRlichman: And so that's when you put on the full court press. Now,...

PRESIDENT: All right. Here's--That'll go against. Fine--That was fine (unintelligible). You've got the dates on this, so don't worry about it. We better get this out.

EHRlichman: I have them in there -Yeah.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) The point is, uh, let's see, let's see what Dean says to that. He says, "Well, the reason I couldn't write it down was because Dick Moore and others said that we, we were all talking and how would we write it down -bring it down to the White House. How do we draw the wagons up around the White House?" That phrase recurs. You don't remember--remember that?

EHRlichman: Sure. Isn't that a Dean phrase?

HALDEMAN: Yep. His line was that, that you could do that because there was no problem at the White House, and the problems were at the Committee, and Dean...

PRESIDENT: Dean.

HALDEMAN: his idea was...

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible). What did he tell you in that respect? I don't know. What was Dean's line here before he, uh, uh, uh, deserted?

EHRlichman: Well...

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: What he, what he said and what was on my mind --

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible). You see, my aim, my point, my point is you've got to watch out. He may say, "Well, they were trying to get me, uh, conspired, to write a report that was untrue."

EHRlichman: Well, I understand, except that he was sent to write it without anybody being near him.

PRESIDENT: Except Moore (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: And, and I'm sure that when he went through this exercise, it was impossible for him to write it down without it being a confession. And he said, "My God, I don't know how this case is going to break, but I'm crazy to have a-piece of paper like that around."

PRESIDENT: Then I could say, then, that I ordered it. Uh, who conducted the investigation for this area?

EHRlichman: Apparently, the, the way we got it doesn't say.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: It didn't say anything.

HALDEMAN: You asked the other staff members to explore this You had Ehrlichman, Moore, Garment, Haldeman.

PRESIDENT: That's right.

EHRlichman: You had (unintelligible)

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: Do you have that, uh -

PRESIDENT: Well that - We don't need it right yet (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: (Unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: All right. All right. From that, can I ask him who's for it? And then--

EHRlichman: Then you contacted some people and said, "Don't hold back on my account."

PRESIDENT: Yes, I, uh - like Hunt and Liddy.

EHRlichman: Well, like Mitchell and Magruder.

PRESIDENT: Yeah. I, I passed the word to, uh, all
REEL 2 BEGINS.

sources that everybody was to talk to tell the truth, which I had done previously. I, uh, I reaffirmed. I looked at...

EHRlichman: ...with specific people with specific terms.

PRESIDENT: ...I reaffirmed...

EHRlichman: Yep.

PRESIDENT: ...specific terms to specific people. Uh...

REEL 1 ENDS.

HALDEMAN: Where you had reason to believe that they may might...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: Might have a misapprehension on it, that's the way. (Unintelligible)

PRESIDENT: Amy misapprehension, so forth and so on, to ah, all parties involved, who were those people, that it could be against (unintelligible), but then I would not say (unintelligible) not say.

HALDEMAN: I'd like one list of those people.

PRESIDENT: Well, you can't list the people for reasons that, that would prejudice them in his favor like Mitchell's case is not involved here, that is I talked to all the parties concerned that were, that all parties concerned where there was any shred of information, a shred of information, which might in any way, ah, that which they might have ah, on this case, I ah, I (unintelligible) I've (unintelligible) I reaffirmed what I had said publicly that they must cooperate fully and tell the, and tell the whole truth, ah, and then we come to the last weekend (unintelligible)

EHRlichman: I would...

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) the same?

EHRlichman: Saturday, I know.

PRESIDENT: Saturday, a major development occurred, ah I can't say, that as a result of what I did they heard.

EHRlichman: Nope.

PRESIDENT: That would be an overstatement. I could say on Saturday many new developments occurred and on Sunday, I can't say that I talked to Kleindienst (unintelligible). Just say on Sunday.

EHRlichman: Well, except remember I informed Kleindienst on Saturday.

PRESIDENT: That's right.

EHRlichman: So you could, you informed him, you talked, you informed...

PRESIDENT: I informed him, informed ah, I informed Kleindienst over the weekend, well the windup questions, is did he inform me personally. You can say I passed this information to, or some damn thing like...

EHRlichman: Say the word is that...

PRESIDENT: I passed the word, ah, I ah informed the ah Attorney General, ah why don't we say through John Ehrlichman, I mean, ah, at my direction John Ehrlichman, ah filled in the Attorney General completely on the information we had developed and ah, on Sunday, determining on that determining the Attorney General on so and so, ah, ah, they, they indicated that ah, as a result their invest--and as a result, that they resulted therein a major there, a, major developments in the case

PRESIDENT: these major developments, ah, ah, ah involved charges of, uh, considering that all charges have been mentioned, major developments, in the case at that point. I think we got to get Petersen in at that point don't you?

EHRlichman: Well, then, than ah Ziegler and you could, ah, turn it over to Petersen and have him say some...something innocuous.

PRESIDENT: Major developments in the case and ah, I directed, ah, ah Mr. Petersen to report to me personally, ah, ah and on, on that and I had been ah, report to me personally on developments and that he was to ah, any member of the White House staff, and any person connected, ah, was to testify, ah, be available to the Grand Jury, and would testify, would be directed by the President to ah, testify (unintelligible) completed.

EHRlichman: True. (Unintelligible)

PRESIDENT: Ah, now you come to the next thing, you see the Garment's scenario here will be I am, I have ah, I have requested that ah, what (unintelligible) but ah...

EHRlichman: more recently?

PRESIDENT: I've, ah, I've asked that ah (unintelligible) to any, any Government people who have been, who I understand who have been, ah who are directly or indirectly ah, the subjects of the investigation even though, I mean ah, all this is no indication for your guilt, ah, will, ah, ah be relieved of their duties, ah and ah, until ah, ah until the President, ah, until the Grand Jury receives from them, say, obviously anyone who refuses to cooperate will be dismissed. Anyone who is indicted will be dismissed.

HALDEMAN: Is that it?

PRESIDENT: Yes.

EHRlichMAN: Really?

PRESIDENT: Yes, you can't have these things, if, if it will an, any, anyone indicted will be, anyone who is, anyone who gives up will be dismissed. Anyone will be given leave until ah, his, ah until their trial is ah, until ah, he's had an opportunity to have his day in court.

HALDEMAN: O.K.?

PRESIDENT: Now, that (unintelligible) indicted (unintelligible) you can't kill a person on just for being indicted. But he has to take leave (unintelligible) case (unintelligible).

HALDEMAN: He should be, that is true.

PRESIDENT: Well, at any rate--

EHRlichMAN: How about anyone granted immunity?

HALDEMAN: Be dismissed.

PRESIDENT: Anyone granted immunity ah, will be ah, let me, let me, try Petersen on you today. Your, your idea about Petersen would be to hit him, promptly with that. Say I don't want anybody granted immunity.

EHRlichMAN: It's a matter of public policy, I can't have it.

PRESIDENT: Yep. I'd say (unintelligible)...telling you that (unintelligible) President what would, what would Petersen's (unintelligible) it all say, ah the President's ah, ah...

EHRlichMAN: Tying our hands.

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PRESIDENT: trying our hands but no, we're not telling Dean not to talk. I direct everybody to talk, but this but I nobody is to be given immunity.

EHRlichman: In other words, ah, you don't, you don't need,...ah, there, there are plenty of ways of proving a case around here besides granting some fellow immunity

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: You don't, you don't need that, and it looks like what you're doing is letting somebody off scott free.

PRESIDENT: That's right.

EHRlichman: And particularly (unintelligible)...

PRESIDENT: And also it looks like a cover up

HALDEMAN: And particularly somebody with whom you happen to be, head of the Criminal Division, happens to be very closely, personally associated in this case. Now, ah, ah

EHRlichman: Pete, Petersen, isn't it? I think maybe the point that Petersen's missing...ah, ah maybe intentionally so, is that Dean is a major actor in this thing.

PRESIDENT: Yep.

EHRlichman: And, ah, big fish/small fish nevertheless, if a major actor gets immunity and justs walks away from the White House, having committed 89 crimes

PRESIDENT: That's right.

EHRlichman: Ah, that, and it's your Justice Department.

PRESIDENT: That's right.

EHRlichman: And the guy that grants it is reporting daily to you.

PRESIDENT: Right.

EHRlichman: What does that say? That says: "Gee, I didn't want my counsel to get hurt." The only question that remains is why didn't he grant immunity to everybody.

HALDEMAN: What it says is exactly that point, that the counsel knows more than (unintelligible)

PRESIDENT: Now, should I have any more conversations with Dean?

EHRlichman: No, I don't think you should. I think you ought to send him a note and tell him what your decision is.

PRESIDENT: All right. I can do that.

EHRlichman: Or have, have Kehrli or somebody call him.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) I can do this.

EHRlichman: And say, "Don't come to work anymore. You're not suspended, you're not, ah, ah fired but you're not to come into the office until this matter's disposed of."

PRESIDENT: All right, all right, fine. That's ah, good tough way. -What does he do now?

EHRlichman: I don't think he can do anything, if ah, somebody says to him, "Ah well, have you been suspended?" "No, I really haven't I'm just sort of ah, not working until..."

HALDEMAN: Hell, he hasn't been to-work for a month any way.

EHRlichman: That's true, he's been out talking to the U.S. Attorney.

HALDEMAN: Hell on that. Hell he's in here cause it serves his purpose to be the inside source. (Pause) he's been out of the office for a month. He's been working (unintelligible)...

PRESIDENT: I called him this morning and I told him I wanted to talk to him, he said earlier, later, he was to ask him about that appointment June 19th, but I don't think I better get into that crap anymore.

EHRlichman: I don't either, ah.

PRESIDENT: And he says-he's gonna give me some song and dance.

EHRlichman: Well, that'll need to be proved out of this. For your, your private information I have gone back to the participants in that meeting where I was supposed to have said: "Send Hunt out of the country."

PRESIDENT: Um hum.

EHRlichman: Ah, to a man, they say it didn't happen.

PRESIDENT: Um hum.

EHRlichman: No that's and and two of them said gee, if if

PRESIDENT: What about the meeting if Pete said...

EHRlichman: Neither one of these remarks. And they said if that had happened that would have been burned into my recollection as an extraordinary thing like you ordering...

PRESIDENT: ...placement center, for example.

EHRlichman: Yep, although, ah, ah, he says, if, if ah--

HALDEMAN: Doesn't remember being there.

EHRlichman: No, he doesn't remember being at that meeting but he remembers being...

PRESIDENT: You better God-damned well remember being things, I, the main thing is this, John, and when you meet with the lawyers, and you, Bob, and I hope to Christ, Strachan has been told you told him don't you, "Believe me, don't try to hedge anything."

EHRlichman: No. of course not.

PRESIDENT: Before those God-damned Grand Juries...

EHRlichman: ...of course not...

PRESIDENT: I'm not talking about morality, but I'm talking about the vulnerabilities.

EHRlichman: Sure.

PRESIDENT: The intention is sure as hell, I mean this is--

EHRlichman: Good advice.

PRESIDENT: Huh?

EHRlichman: Good advice.

PRESIDENT: You guys, you guys, you guys...

EHRlichman: Yeah.

PRESIDENT: God damnit I know the, the, this God-damned thing (unintelligible) I do know, I know about it, I do know this, I do know that they've, they've tried to trap you on, on perjury.

EHRlichman: Well, fortunately...

PRESIDENT: They're gonna have that--

EHRlichman: Fortunately, I have good records, I know who was in that meeting.

PRESIDENT: Right.

EHRlichman: And, ah, so I was able to call.

PRESIDENT: I also know that the attorneys, that the, that the, that, that, that certain materials -the point is now they've obviously talked to (unintelligible) that ah, they talked to people, somebody put those things in their bag, the bag (coughs) I suppose Fielding was the guy that...

EHRlichman: Fielding or Dean.

PRESIDENT: ...in the bag.

EHRlichman: Fielding or Dean. I don't know.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: Well, let me just tell you what this...

PRESIDENT: What--did he, did he inventory it, for example who's going to testify what the hell was in that bag?

EHRlichman: I don't know, but, but may I just finish telling you about this...

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: ...about this Dean thing--I think it's important for you to have a feel for it.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) to do with Dean.

EHRlichman: Well it does. And also, Dean is the guy that made the call in sending Hunt out of the country

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: Oh, but ah...

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) yeah.

EHRlichman: The, the, ah, ah, interesting thing about it all is that Friday he called Colson and said, "Chuck, you remember a meeting up in John's office, where John said so and so and deep six and John said send Hunt out of the country, don't you?"

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: And Chuck said, "I told him it never happened."

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: And, and I didn't raise this with Chuck, he raised it with me.

PRESIDENT: Um.

EHRlichman: And said I get this funny phone call from this guy so he's out around planting these seeds.

HALDEMAN: He's playing the Magruder game-flying from flower to flower planting his pollen.

EHRlichman: So I don't, ah, I don't think we're gonna...

PRESIDENT: I think you have in those cases, you've got very clever liars.

HALDEMAN: Sure.

PRESIDENT: I've told, I've told you this before.

EHRlichman: Yep.

PRESIDENT: Very clever liars.

EHRlichman: Well yep

PRESIDENT: Why don't they have (unintelligible) on this, particularly in this discussion I got trapped into doing for example.

PRESIDENT And he comes in and he says? "Well, Haldeman
(CONTINUED): knows it all." I said: "Well of course,
 everybody who gets, got, is involved in this
 and that's, there's no (unintelligible)."

EHRlichman: I think he, I think he...

PRESIDENT: :(Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: slides by that by just saying, "Stay home,
 don't come into the office."

PRESIDENT: Yeah. I say John, I think it's best that
 you not come into the office until this
 thing is ended and obviously you're not...

EHRlichman: We, I tell you the one way you might do it.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: By just saying, "I've had a report that an
 FBI man..."

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: "...Who was about to serve a subpoena on
 Dick Howard, told Howard to come and talk to
 you." Now I can't have that.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: Because you, you cannot sit there as an
 agent of the U.S. Attorney (unintelligible)

PRESIDENT: I indicated that already, to ah
 (unintelligible)

HALDEMAN: It's that Dean will say the same thing you
 just said, which is: I can't prepare my
 case for the Grand Jury if I can't work with
 my files and so forth, and ah, so if you're
 telling me not to come in, I'll send a truck
 over and have my files brought to my home."
 That would take care of getting his files
 out (unintelligible) any problem.

PRESIDENT: You don't want his files, ah subpoenaed?

HALDEMAN: Well -can or can't.

EHRlichman: Can't subpoena, they're yours.

HALDEMAN: Well, there is a question on that (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: (Unintelligible) that's the position you ought to take on that.

HALDEMAN: Damn right. All of our files are yours and they can are not subject to any action...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: ...that your files aren't subject to.

PRESIDENT: Shall I tell him that?

HALDEMAN: Nope.

EHRlichman: Let's wait until the question comes up, thank you.

PRESIDENT: Well that helps (unintelligible) how do I answer the question, I, Bob, (unintelligible) in case I have to have your files! Well, we've got a matter of (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: Well he's already made his statement. It's obvious that ah...

PRESIDENT: To Grand Jury.

EHRlichman: ...to the U.S. Attorney, it's obvious that, that ah, he's passed that point.

(Pause)

PRESIDENT: I don't think I can write him a note, I think it's, it's gonna anger him whatever he says or does. No sense in doing that. Ah, you know what I mean?

EHRlichman: Yeah.

PRESIDENT: Ah, we've got to be, ah, we've got to remember whatever the son-of-a-bitch is doing, ah, I don't mean that you can't--he's going to do anything to save his ass. That's what is involved. But on the other hand, ah, you've got him in, uh...

EHRlichman: O.K. I got an idea on that.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) as President why that, that's, that's you've got to remember that you got this on others you know, he put this a lot higher. He could say, "Well, I told the President about \$127,000."

EHRlichman: Yep.

PRESIDENT: That we needed \$127,000 and ah, I said, "Well, I don't know where we could get it, you've gotta -I don't know, course I (unintelligible)

UNIDENTIFIED: How, how (unintelligible) that, though that's true.

EHRlichman: Well, you're all right, I-tell you how you might be able to handle that.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: I'm worried

PRESIDENT: Jesus.

EHRlichman: The FBI has just served a subpoena on our White House police, which asked that they produce the names of people cleared into the White House/EOB complex from 12:01 A.M., June 18, 1972 to 11:00 P.M., June 18, 1972.

PRESIDENT: Jesus Christ.

EHRlichman: Now what in the hell

PRESIDENT: Where were we then?

HALDEMAN: What date?

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PRESIDENT: Ah, June 18.

HALDEMAN: June 18.

EHRlichman: The day of the bugging.

HALDEMAN: We were in San Clemente.

EHRlichman: Really?

HALDEMAN: Yeah.

EHRlichman: Florida.

HALDEMAN: I mean Florida, I'm sorry I think San Clemente you were out, that was the weekend that you went, we flew directly to Grand Cay and you went to Walkers and we went over to Key Biscayne.

PRESIDENT: And this...(unintelligible). Well maybe that's the Hunt safe thing. I bet it's the Hunt's safe thing. (Clears throat)

EHRlichman: Hmm--the, the White House police had notified Fred Fielding of the subpoena. See that's your other problem. Now we've got a White House legal case and we got no White House lawyer, you know, there's another interesting end to look at.

PRESIDENT: Where's Fielding stand on all this?

HALDEMAN: He's Dean's creature. Lives next door to him, Dean sponsored him.

PRESIDENT: What do we do to him?

HALDEMAN: That doesn't necessarily mean he goes Dean's way.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: Fielding is an honorable guy.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: Provincially so, who ah, may not like what Dean's doing any better than we do.

Pause -noise in background.

PRESIDENT: Well, point is Dean'll say this is not going to prejudice you publicly or anything of that sort, but I do think that you should not be, frantic, what you want to do is get him out of the White. House, and ah, yet Colson's, Colson's remedy of course is get him out and fire him. All right.

EHRlichman: Colson would like to discredit him...

PRESIDENT: Well I know; but ah, what the hell he's uh, ah, the question is what he would do to discredit us.

EHRlichman: Well, in my view...

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) that's a problem.

HALDEMAN: Yeah, but I think you, got to, at some, some point, like you do on anything else, you gotta face up to the fact that the guy is either a friend or a foe or a neutral. If he's a neutral you don't have to worry about him; if he's a friend you rely on him, and if he's a foe, you fight him, and this guy, it seems...(unintelligible)...

PRESIDENT: Well at least.

HALDEMAN: to find is a foe.

PRESIDENT: At, at a, least when I talked to him, I said, "Now, now, John any conversations are, are privileged do you realize that?" "Yes" I said, "Anything for national security or anything" I said, "was privileged, you understand." He said, "Yes. And I'll testify to that." I told him I got that out of the testimony. (Unintelligible)...there was no problem.

HALDEMAN: O.K. He said that maybe there was no problem for him to say that, but there was no problem for him to say a lot of things to us over the last couple of weeks too.

PRESIDENT: No, no. (Unintelligible)...

EHRlichMAN: I think, ah.

PRESIDENT: ...understand that. The point is, the point is if, if you break it off with him, then he could go out and say "Screw the privilege."

HALDEMAN: No he can't. It's not his privilege, it's yours.

EHRlichMAN: It's yours.

PRESIDENT: I know it's mine but ah-

HALDEMAN: He screws the privilege, he's finished.

EHRlichMAN: Well. I think you have to charge Henry Petersen or whoever you get, gets as a man in charge here with protecting your privilege and then that's got to go down to Silbert and Silbert has to be cautioned that he is not to go into matters of executive privilege and he is not to go into matters of national security importance.

PRESIDENT: Any matters involving a conversation with the President, involve national security, if they want to know anything, they can ask me.

EHRlichMAN: Now, ah, the question comes up, I don't know how far this will run, but this caper in California, for instance. Ah, Colson asked me.

PRESIDENT: Which caper?

EHRlichMAN: This, this thing of Hunt's out there, the the national security thing they connected Ellsberg.

PRESIDENT: That's right. They haven't found it yet.

EHRlichman: Well Petersen knows about it. I think. It's laying around somewhere, but ah, if the question comes up, Colson says "How do I handle that I said, Chuck, well, if I were asked that, I would say that, "That is a national, that was a national security project and I'm not in the position to answer a question on that, ah, because I think it falls within the ambit of executive privilege."

PRESIDENT: That's right.

EHRlichman: "Now, I would have to refer it to the President for a waiver of executive privilege on that if he desired to do so." And he said, "Well can I say the same thing?" And I said, "Well, I don't know whether you can or not." He said, "Well what would the President say if it's referred to him?" And I said "I don't know, I haven't asked him."

PRESIDENT: That's what we'd say.

EHRlichman: Ok? Can I tell him that...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: for you?

PRESIDENT: All right.

EHRlichman: All right.

PRESIDENT: ...anything (unintelligible) anything, anything in leak thing, the plumbing thing was national security.

EHRlichman: That's what it was.

PRESIDENT: Anything in the plumbing thing and, and, and that the, the ITT thing, no I can't plead it was that, you know. Uh, Hunt did there. It's quite apparent...

HALDEMAN: **RESTRICTED-"B"**

PRESIDENT:

HALDEMAN:

RESTRICTED-"B"

UNIDENTIFIED:

EHRlichman:

HALDEMAN: I doubt if Dean knew about that, I don't-- see Dean and Colson never tracked particularly well together, I don't think. Well, I don't know if they did or not.

EHRlichman: Ah, whoever, whoever operates this at the Justice Department, has to be told that the inquiry must not jeopardize your privilege. Someday, they're going to try and put you in a crunch spot.

PRESIDENT: Sure.

EHRlichman: And they'll put a question to me and I'll say I can't take that question.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: And then I'll be back to you.

PRESIDENT: No problem...

EHRlichman: And ah, it's going to be hard.

PRESIDENT: No, for me at all, it's national security, it's in a national security area and that is a national security problem.

EHRlichman: Or if it's something that ah, you and I've discussed directly, ah.

PRESIDENT: Hope not.

EHRlichman: I'll just cold cock that, I'll just...

HALDEMAN: I don't think anybody's going to try and challenge that...

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HALDEMAN,

EHRlichMAN, and

THE PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible)...ask Dean the question what his conversation with the President but he can use it with the press. That's all I care about.

EHRlichMAN: Right.

PRESIDENT: That's what we have to do (unintelligible).

HALDEMAN: Yeah, but, but, boy, he's just gotta be totally without honor, (unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: The background involving what, maybe...

HALDEMAN: You have to sink awful low before you get to that.

PRESIDENT: Talked to the President about, uh \$127,000 we had to get or we were getting so much. I don't know how that, why it was at that point that we were still working on money for Hunt, what, what was it we were, I don't know how the hell (unintelligible).

HALDEMAN: That was the, that was the one that, that Bittman got to Dean on...

PRESIDENT: Yeah, Dean told...

HALDEMAN: ...directly. And that he really panicked on it. He was very concerned.

PRESIDENT: He came in and told me.

HALDEMAN: ...professed to be concerned because Bittman's threat was that Hunt said that "If you don't get it to me, I'm going to tell them all about, all about the seamy things I did for Ehrlichman and when Dean..."

PRESIDENT: That's right.

HALDEMAN: And when Dean hit Ehrlichman on that, Ehrlichman's immediate reaction was let him go ahead, I have, there's nothing he can hang me on.

PRESIDENT: That's right.

HALDEMAN: Dean didn't want that answer, and went, went on worrying about the money.

PRESIDENT: Told me about it.

HALDEMAN: Told you about it, told me about it and the whole point, I was in here when he told you.

PRESIDENT: Well, ah, good. What, what did we say? Remember he said, "How much is it going to cost to keep these three guys?" He said, "A million dollars." I just shook my head.

HALDEMAN: Then we got into the question, if there's, if there's blackmail here, then we're into a thing that's...

PRESIDENT: All right.

HALDEMAN: ...just ridiculous and he said, he raised the point. Now my feeling on that point remember that, that, Jesus, you can't say it's a million dollars. It may be 10 million dollars.

PRESIDENT: That's right

HALDEMAN: Once we get into that.

PRESIDENT: That's right, that's right.

HALDEMAN: And that we...

PRESIDENT: ought to...

HALDEMAN: That we ought not to be in this and then we left it, you know, we can't do anything about it anyway. We don't have any money, and ah, it isn't a question to be directed here. This is something, relates to Mitchell's problem. Ehrlichman has no problem with the thing with Hunt. And Ehrlichman said; "Christ, if you're going to get into blackmail, the hell with it."

PRESIDENT: Good. The word blackmail, thank God you were in there when it happened, but you remember the conversation.

HALDEMAN: Yes, sir.

PRESIDENT: I didn't tell him to go get the money, did I?

HALDEMAN: No.

PRESIDENT: No you didn't, you didn't either, did you?

HALDEMAN: Absolutely not. I said, "You've got to talk to Mitchell, this is something you got to work out with Mitchell, not here, there's nothing we can do about it here."

PRESIDENT: I think we've got a pretty good record on that one, John, at least.

HALDEMAN: Ah, but there's a couple of complications be can throw in there (unintelligible) which would be of concern, but I just can't conceive that a guy, he may, I can see him using it as a threat. I cannot see him sinking low enough to use that. I, I Just, although I must admit the guy has really turned into an unbelievable disaster for us.

PRESIDENT: Yes.

HALDEMAN: But I can't, people don't, he's not un-American and anti-Nixon. I'll tell you what he did, I'll tell you during that period.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: he busted his ass trying to work this out, and it wore him to a frazzle and I think it probably wore him past the point of rationality. I think he may now be in, a mental state that's causing him to do things that, that ah, when he sobers up, he's going to be very disturbed about with himself.

PRESIDENT: Also, he's probably got a very, very clever new lawyer named Shaffer. I think that's part of the problem.

HALDEMAN: Could very well be.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible)

HALDEMAN: Could very well be. But John, I can't believe is a basically dishonorable guy. I think there's no question John is a strong self-promoter, self-motivated guy for his own good, but ah.

PRESIDENT: Yet in that conversation. I, we were I was very, I said, "Well for Christ s sake--but, ah."

HALDEMAN: You explored in that conversation the possibility of whether such kinds of money could be raised. You said, "Well, Christ, we ought to be able to raise money."

PRESIDENT: That's right.

HALDEMAN: How much money is involved and he said, "Well, it could be a million dollars over the next year."

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible)

HALDEMAN: I said, "That's ridiculous. You can't say a million maybe you say a million, it may be 2 or 10, and, ah."

PRESIDENT: But then we got into the blackmail.

HALDEMAN: You said, "Once you start down the path with blackmail, and ah, it's constant escalation, and--"

PRESIDENT: Yeah, yeah. That's my only...

HALDEMAN: (Unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: ...conversation with regard to that.

HALDEMAN: They could jump and then say to us, "Well that was morally wrong." What you should have said is "Blackmail is wrong, not that it's too costly."

PRESIDENT: Oh, well, at that point that we got into (unintelligible) we went into the investigation.

HALDEMAN: (Unintelligible) that's right.

PRESIDENT: You see my point? We were then in the business of the, this was, this was one of Dean's, when he was, ah, was it after that we sent him to Camp David?

EHRlichman: You sent him to Camp David on about the, ah, 20...

PRESIDENT: I would like to know with regard to that conversation, Bob, I just wanted to know.

EHRlichman: It took place about the 23rd, that is his trip to Camp David, about the 23rd of March.

HALDEMAN: When, when was that Hunt threat?

EHRlichman: I haven't any idea. I have no idea.

PRESIDENT: Get that worked out, please.

HALDEMAN: I don't know, better check on it.

PRESIDENT: Well, it, oh hell.

EHRlichman: Well, you'll know the date of your meeting here.

HALDEMAN: Well, uh, uh, you can't--

PRESIDENT: Well, (unintelligible) to say, I suppose then we should have cut it off, shut it off, because later on you met in your office and, I mean, and Mitchell said, "That was taken care of."

EHRlichman: The next day.

HALDEMAN: That's right.

UNIDENTIFIED: The same day.

HALDEMAN: Maybe I can find the date by that.

PRESIDENT: Yeah and Dean, Dean was there and said, "What about this money for Hunt?" Wasn't Dean there?

HALDEMAN: No, what happened was, Ehrlichman and Dean and Mitchell and I were in the office, my office, and we were discussing other matters. And in the process of it, Mitchell said, "Let me raise one point", and he turned to Dean. He said, "Let me raise another point, ah, have you taken care of the, the is the other problem, Hunt's problem?" Something like that. I don't know how he referred to it. But we all knew instantly what he was, what he meant and Dean kind of looked a little flustered and said, "Well, well, ah, no, I mean I don't know where that is" or something; and Mitchell said, "Well I guess it's taken care of." And so we assumed from that, that Mitchell had taken care of it, and there was no further squeak out of it, so I now do assume Mitchell took care of it so...

PRESIDENT: Yeah, the problem I have there is I said, (unintelligible).

HALDEMAN: Mitchell that LaRue, as I understand it, LaRue was Mitchell's agent, but ah...

PRESIDENT: Yeah, as I understand it, what I meant is, I'm just trying to seek out whether, I'm just seeing what are Dean's lines of attack are.

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HALDEMAN: And you're saying, "Did I know about that?"
I did. Yeah, there's no question.

PRESIDENT: Say, "Yes there was talk about it and so
forth, and Mitchell took care of it, but,
ah, gee, but, ah, on the other hand, you
make the case as to (unintelligible).

HALDEMAN: You can't testify to that, it's
Presidential--

PRESIDENT: In this office, but not in the other office,
not in your office.

HALDEMAN: O.k. but in the other office the question
of, of...

PRESIDENT: That's right.

HALDEMAN: and, and the specifics never arose. And
there again Dean is the agent on it. Dean's
coming in, saying, "What should I do?"
Dean's the agent on all this. That's where
my money goes. All the input to me about the
350 came from Dean, and all the output came
from Dean. That's the only time I...

PRESIDENT: Then Dean was the one that said, "Look Bob,
we need 350 for or need the rest of the
money."

HALDEMAN: No, they didn't even come that way. Dean
said, "They need money for the defense."

PRESIDENT: Right.

HALDEMAN: For their fees.

PRESIDENT: Right.

HALDEMAN: And that's the, was always put that way,
that's the way it was always discussed.

PRESIDENT: Right. That's why I want that line. I think that's most important, you can work on. Get a lawyer. (Unintelligible)

HALDEMAN: And I said.

PRESIDENT: lawyer.

HALDEMAN: And I said to Dean at that time, "Well look you've got a situation here. We've got the 300, I thought it was 350, it was 328, in cash that we needed to get turned back to the committee."

PRESIDENT: Right.

HALDEMAN: Apparently they had a need for money so we have a coincidence (unintelligible)--now you ought to be able to work out some way to get them to take the cash and that will take care of our needs, and apparently help meet their needs.

PRESIDENT: Right, right.

HALDEMAN: Then he went back to Mitchell, and Mitchell wouldn't do it, and then they agreed to take 40 thousand of it, which they did, and shortly thereafter they agreed to take the rest, which they did.

PRESIDENT: Do you think did you check with (unintelligible) before the election and shortly afterwards?

HALDEMAN: It was not before the election, no.

PRESIDENT: On that was what Dean's story was about and Dean said it was before.

HALDEMAN: Strachan.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible)

HALDEMAN: Strachan says it was in late November, the 30th, on 29th or, some nonsense like that.

EHRlichman: Incidentally, remember you told me that, ah Strachan had gone over there with Colson's partner and that the Judge wouldn't take him.

EHRlichman: It turned out that it was Howard who went over, who with ah, Dick Howard went over with one of Colson's partners and the U.S. Attorney kicked up a fuss about it. Ah, saying that there might be a communication between the partner and Colson.

PRESIDENT: Right.

EHRlichman: And so ah

HALDEMAN: Stracban's lawyer is a totally separate guy that he's acquired from somebody he knew in law school.

PRESIDENT: Good.

EHRlichman: Now, Colson has pitched me to retain his partner, which I think would be a mistake.

PRESIDENT: You?

EHRlichman: Yeah.

PRESIDENT: You can't retain his partner.

EHRlichman: I don't think so.

HALDEMAN and

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: Be a big mistake because it would create an identity, ah between me and Colson, that I don't feel comfortable with.

PRESIDENT: I don't want you to do it that way.

HALDEMAN: Whether you can't or not I think you'd be out of your mind to do it.

PRESIDENT: Don't get in there with Colson, ah, Colson will, he'll defend himself.

HALDEMAN: Well, obviously, Colson sees that as a way of...

EHRlichman: Sure.

HalDEMAN: Getting in.

EHRlichman: Sure.

HalDEMAN: (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: Sure

HalDEMAN: (Unintelligible)

EHRlichman: Sure.

HalDEMAN: We should not give Colson reason to get squeamish though...

PRESIDENT: No.

EHRlichman: I'm cultivating him.

PRESIDENT: No, sir.

EHRlichman: I'm cultivating him, I'm keeping him on the team. He feels that there is a coincidence of interest between you and me and him.

PRESIDENT: Right, that's fine.

HalDEMAN: Let him: consider (unintelligible)

EHRlichman: Right.

PRESIDENT: Right, all the time, all the time, coming back now to the, ah, decision on the game plan, well, first should we make a statement today?

HalDEMAN: I would say yes.

EHRlichman: Yep.

HalDEMAN: I think it's a good...

PRESIDENT: Should I make it, should Ziegler make it?

HALDEMAN: Ziegler should make it.

EHRlichman: Well, let me argue that you should.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: ah, if it is a...

PRESIDENT: in a press conference--

EHRlichman: ...if it is a carefully limited statement.

PRESIDENT: Yeah, no questions though.

EHRlichman: I think--

PRESIDENT: You would take questions, wouldn't you?

EHRlichman: No, sir, and, and, and I think it should be a very tight statement, a very conservative--

PRESIDENT: I should read it.

EHRlichman: Well, at least you should think it through as you...

PRESIDENT: Oh, yes.

EHRlichman: ...usually do. So that you can, ah--

PRESIDENT: I mean, ah...

EHRlichman: Uh, stay away from the soft places. But think broadly across the country people are waiting to see your face on the evening news talking about the Watergate case...

PRESIDENT: Right, OK.

EHRlichman: And making your assurances of...

PRESIDENT: Bill Rogers said this

EHRlichman and

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: His first thought about using Ziegler and as we left the boat last night, said, "I've been been thinking about it," said he, he totally rules out the 9:00 thing. He said, "Apparently not."

EHRlichman: Good.

PRESIDENT: He says, "For Christ's sake", he says, "Don't make it the only story in town, it'll be the only story in town", he said "for 3 or 4 months. And that would be fine. That's all right (unintelligible)...don't the (unintelligible)..."

HALDEMAN: You know where the Watergate story is in the Washington Post today? Page 19.

PRESIDENT: We wish it would die out.

EHRlichman: Well, they're laying in the weeds. We're in an ebb tide right now.

PRESIDENT: But I know, I know, we and it'll be page 19 in five months from now if we handle it right (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: Now I suggested having Petersen stand by. I don't think that's a good idea.

PRESIDENT: No. no, not at all, no I simply gotta, go out there and I should say, should make a statement? O.k., uh, John, let's come back to this business here, let's, ah, come back to the, come back to the, the business of the (pause)-which is the play of the White House leaders.

EHRlichman: Um.

PRESIDENT: Doesn't work.

EHRlichman: Well, I think.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: In view of the foregoing in view of all that's gone and all that's been said I think if you can get the results of having Dean out of his office, and I wouldn't worry about the files. I think you could put it on a basis that if he needs a file he could get it, ah, upon loan so that you could, at least, you would be able to monitor what he was getting. Ah, I think it, that it...

HALDEMAN: (Unintelligible) come and get it.

EHRlichman: Well he could arrange, so he didn't.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: Ah, that, ah, you would say to him, "In view of your relationship with the U.S. Attorney's office, I just don't think it is prudent for you to be on the grounds."

PRESIDENT: That's right.

EHRlichman: "And you're going to have to work from someplace else."

HALDEMAN: "I don't think there's any appearance problem because you have been for a month anyway."

EHRlichman: "Right, it won't be noticed. If we are asked in the press room..."

PRESIDENT: That's right.

EHRlichman: "...ah, what your status is..."

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: "We'll finesse it."

PRESIDENT: "That's right, there'll be no change..."

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EHRlichman: And if the question will come, "Well, has John Dean been placed on leave?" "No."
"Has John Dean been fired?"

PRESIDENT: "No." Alright, alright.

EHRlichman: And you, and you could say to him, "If you don't bring it up, we won't."

PRESIDENT: Alright, OK.

EHRlichman: "If this leaks, it'll leak from you because nobody is going to know it"

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: "And, uh, as far as Bob and John are concerned, I will make an appropriate arrangement with them."

PRESIDENT: I'm going to make an appropriate arrangement cov, covering them. Course it's something different."

EHRlichman: "But I cannot be in a position of having you dictate to me what it should be."

PRESIDENT: I, ah, that's right.

HALDEMAN: And you can't be in a position.
(Unintelligible)

PRESIDENT: No, I can tell him I've made an appropriate arrangement but it's got to be in my own, uh in my own way, ah depending from here...

EHRlichman: Well--more than that, I think you could argue with, with him that the transition from John Dean being away from here...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: ...and the transition of Haldeman being away from here...

PRESIDENT: Or Ehrlichman.

EHRlichMAN: ...is a very different kind of thing.

PRESIDENT: That's right, that's right, that's right.

EHRlichMAN: And so it would have to be something that...

PRESIDENT: "But we're not asking..."

EHRlichMAN: ...you considered appropriate.

PRESIDENT: "...we're not asking anybody to resign, John

EHRlichMAN: That's right.

PRESIDENT: "...because I think that would prejudice their rights."

EHRlichMAN: Taking a formal leave.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) all right, fine, you do that, but, but, if you're rejecting the Garment proposal that everybody take a leave until everybody's cleared that I (unintelligible) a moment ago?

EHRlichMAN: Well.

HALDEMAN: No, I'm asking.

EHRlichMAN: I think a leave is the same thing as being fired in this context.

PRESIDENT: Do you Bob?

EHRlichMAN: Prior to the charges being filed...

HALDEMAN: Prior to charges, when you have charges...

EHRlichMAN: That's different.

HALDEMAN: Well now, here's the point of information.

PRESIDENT: Here's the point, here's the point, let me, let me, tell you what's going to happen, in my view. And, by charges I don't mean indictments.

EHRlichMAN: I understand that.

PRESIDENT: But ah, when they, when they finally make
(Continued) their deal with Magruder (unintelligible) you
gotta keep them out of the D.C. jail, ah,
they're going to take him into open court.
This is their deal, now because Judge Sirica
questions him, right, says to John last night,
"They are going to make," he said,
"statement." Now I would assume then the
charges would be made, at least as far as, as
Magruder is concerned.

HALDEMAN: And they said Magruder makes charges against
me? (Pause) Cause that's really interesting.

PRESIDENT: Bob, Bob, I don't know whether he does or not
let's say, let's, let's be damned sure if
we...

EHRlichman: What you are saying...

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) that day he's certainly going
to say that Dean was involved and that
Mitchell was involved.

EHRlichman: And he'll say, "Strachan was involved."

PRESIDENT: And he'll say, "Strachan was involved."

EHRlichman: And who's Strachan. Well, Strachan was...

PRESIDENT: Mr. Haldeman's...

EHRlichman: ...employee.

PRESIDENT: And Strachan.

EHRlichman: ...but my prediction is it will never, if
they, if the Judge says, "Well, did Mr.
Haldeman tell you to do anything, or this or
that," he'll say, "No sir, he was never
involved in this." Flat out.

PRESIDENT: He'll say that.

HALDEMAN: He, he says he told me that is what he would
say.

EHRlichman: And he told me that is what he would say.

HALDEMAN: He told John that is what he would say in
front of his lawyers. That what he had said.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

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HALDEMAN: ...and he flatly says, "That is what is the truth."

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: And it is what's the truth.

PRESIDENT: All right.

HALDEMAN: Now if ah--

PRESIDENT: So your view, John and Bob is that you, you know that ah, you got to look at, got to look at the other point of being eaten away and then having to come in, say, "Look my usefulness has been so impaired I must leave."

HALDEMAN: No, I don't expect to be eaten away. I think when I get hit on anything publicly...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: Let's say Magruder does name me. Let's say Magruder does implicate me in the Watergate.

PRESIDENT: Or Dean. Let's suppose Dean...

HALDEMAN: Publicly, someone that's known publicly. As soon as Dean is...

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) yeah.

HALDEMAN: ...is known publicly...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: ...my view would be that I should then, I should request you...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: ...to give me a leave of absence.

PRESIDENT: So that you can fight.

HALDEMAN: ...so that I can deal with this matter until it is cleared up.

EHRlichman: It'll, it'll depend a little bit, I would think on...

PRESIDENT: Do you

EHRlichman: ...on degree.

PRESIDENT: Degree.

EHRlichman: If it is a Jack Anderson column...

PRESIDENT: Oh, uh, no newspaper

EHRlichman: (Unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: ...now the point that I make, another point I make is the relation that I have now is this case. Suppose that the Assistant Attorney General comes in, as he has recently, says, "Now Magruder, (unintelligible) Magruder and Dean have made charges." The point is whether Dean has, the point is his argument is, "Now you have an, knowledge, sir, and you as President, should act on that knowledge (unintelligible) charges. I'm telling you now that those charges are in the possession of the government. That's what I'm sitting on."

HALDEMAN: O.k., but what's this, than you do that. I happen to know what his motive is and I'll sure as hell use it (unintelligible).

PRESIDENT,

HALDEMAN, and

EHRlichman: (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: All right, all right, you say, "Mr. Assistant Attorney General, I want to explain my policy to you so that you'll know what our relationship is. My policy is, that I will immediately suspend on leave anybody against whom formal charges are filed by indictment or information."

PRESIDENT: By information you mean, that ah..

EHRlichman: "...to see if they don't go before the grand jury."

EHRlichman and

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: "In other words, formal charges are filed. The second that happens, those men will go on leave."

PRESIDENT: Um.

EHRlichman: "This is a town that is so full of wild charges that if I operated on the other basis, even of those who were brought to me by 20 bishops and an Attorney General, I couldn't be suspending people around here or the place would look like a piece of swiss cheese. But let me suggest you do this. You go ahead, diligently pursue the Haldeman and Ehrlichman cases because I need to know."

PRESIDENT: Right.

EHRlichman: "And if you come to me and say that you filed charges, then I'll have really no discretion in the matter."

PRESIDENT: In effect, if you come to me and say that you are going to indict them...

EHRlichman: "criminal charges..."

PRESIDENT: "Criminal charges, then I'll at that time move instantly..."

EHRlichman: Yeah.

PRESIDENT: "...before we do it: publicly."

EHRlichman: "...or Dean or anybody else."
PRESIDENT: That's right.
EHRlichman: "But I can't treat them any different from anybody else. And you have brought me basically, ah uncorroborated charges. At this point...
PRESIDENT: Yeah.
EHRlichman: "...you've said so yourself that you aren't going to be able to deal with Dean, on uncorroborated (unintelligible)."
PRESIDENT: I feel, I feel comfortable with that. I feel comfortable with that.
EHRlichman: But, if you lay out the general ground rules first--
PRESIDENT and
HALDEMAN: (Unintelligible)
PRESIDENT: Why is it, what, is it basically, I, I, I, I what basically, John, what the hell is the Garment, Rose, I guess Moore argument (unintelligible).
EHRlichman: They're writing a New York Times editorial (Pause).
PRESIDENT: Which is what?
EHRlichman: Which is that ah, this is a terrible cancer at the heart of the Presidency, and that there must be, there must be drastic surgery and that you in a case like this, you lean over backwards and...
PRESIDENT: fire them...

EHRlichman: and so forth. Ah, which I'm sure it will be an editorial in many, many newspapers. That ah, Dean has raised serious charges and so on and so forth. And you'll hear a lot of that. Maybe the thing to do is for Ziegler if he gets a question about suspension or firing, to say, "This is the President's general policy without regard to individuals."

PRESIDENT: Sure.

EHRlichman: "Any individuals who's found by the grand jury..."

PRESIDENT: Can, why don't I say that today?

EHRlichman: That's fine.

PRESIDENT: All right.

EHRlichman: That's fine.

PRESIDENT: All right, I think I got, got the message. If you go write just a brief, brief, brief statement. You know, that I can use here, or do you have one, get it back to me quickly. I have to do this at 3:00 today, 3:30.

EHRlichman: All right.

PRESIDENT: How much time have I got?

HALDEMAN: 3:00 or 3:30

EHRlichman: You've got about 45 minutes to an hour.

HALDEMAN: An hour and a half.

PRESIDENT: I've got plenty of time.

HALDEMAN: Uh, Ziegler should delay the 3:00. They've, they've only scheduled a posting. He can put out...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: He can make it 4:00. He can announce the briefing at 4:00.

PRESIDENT: Yeah, that's right.

HALDEMAN: You ought to tell him now though, that you're going to do it though.

TRESIDENT: I think I better do that.

HALDEMAN: I've gotta, better get Ron in and quickly, while we're here...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: ...and review this to see whether he is on top in other words, whether's there's some technical problem he doesn't know about.

PRESIDENT: Just tell them to send Ron in.

EHRlichman: Right, sure.

HALDEMAN: Would you get Ziegler?
(Thirty-nine second pause)

HALDEMAN: Any question about my theory now?

EHRlichman: I wonder if we should talk to him about how to operate in the next couple days.
(Unintelligible) lot of suspicion before we will grant him immunity.

HALDEMAN: I thought so too.

EHRlichman: I don't think so, it would be on the wires, I would think...

PRESIDENT: Well.

EHRlichman: But, ah...

HALDEMAN: Even if they have, they could withdraw it, if they get him before he acts.

EHRlichman: I don't know. Now with, with ah, us out of the play here for a couple of weeks, ah...

PRESIDENT: ...working on this matter

EHRlichman: ...ah, you're going to need a different mode of operation on the domestic side.

PRESIDENT: Yeah, Cole (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: And Ken is fully abreast of everything.

PRESIDENT: All right.

EHRlichman: And I think you ought to just call him direct when you have something.

PRESIDENT: I will, oh, I'll use him...

EHRlichman: Yeah, fine.

PRESIDENT: ...just like I'd use you say, "Ken I've gotta rely on you to wear two hats for a while."

HALDEMAN: Well, looks like you've got no problem, my, well basically my office can run itself. To cover, your, your bases, you can deal with Steve.

PRESIDENT: Steve?

HALDEMAN: On a schedule basis, you'd be better off to deal with Parker. You haven't started doing it so you probably gonna want to.

PRESIDENT: Oh, sure, and, uh like the basic things as to what we do...

HALDEMAN: ...that we review and...

PRESIDENT: Okay.

HALDEMAN: (Unintelligible) would talk to me about Parker...

PRESIDENT: Deal with Parker.

HALDEMAN: ...better, he knows the schedule...

PRESIDENT: I'd like to get acquainted with him anyway.

HALDEMAN: Parker knows the reasons behind everything.

PRESIDENT: ...take a little of that off your shoulders in the future...

HALDEMAN: That's right.

PRESIDENT: ...John and I were talking about that, I want you, let me ask, let me, let us, let us not

PRESIDENT: overlook one greater, let us suppose no
(Continued) charges are filed, oh, ah, and uh, basically
charges filed like the charges filed in
court (unintelligible/**REMOVED**) if it's very
serious (unintelligible) he had knowledge
that the charges might be that Haldeman, the
uh, had knowledge of, in advance er, uh,
that he is ah, and that he ah, he
participated in the money, the ah, cover up,
I'm trying to put Bob worse...

EHRlichman: That's right.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

HALDEMAN: Sure.

PRESIDENT: Then Bob, I think, should take with you do
you agree Bob?

HALDEMAN: Sure.

PRESIDENT: If they make that kind of charge cause the
heat would really go on. But in John's
case, they make the deep six charge, I said
that's tough, I don't think I'd, I'd take
with you on that.

EHRlichman: It's up to you.

HALDEMAN: I think ah...

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) no, I mean that's a
difference in degree.

HALDEMAN: Well I think then each of those is something
that, you have, we have to deal with at the
time...

PRESIDENT: That's right.

HALDEMAN: ...in the context of the time because I
don't think you can anticipate now what that
context will be. You don't know what the
newspapers stories will be. For instance,
right now, and that's another argument
against you taking any action regarding me
particularly...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: ...is that I'm not in the thing at all...

PRESIDENT: Um hum.

HALDEMAN: ...in the public mind, and it would be startling as hell...

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: (Unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: Yeah, but incidentally another reason for not going the Garment road is basically the uh, the uh, uh he wants, John, he wants Mitchell separated (unintelligible). He said, "By God, Mitchell's got to come out first (unintelligible)." See my point?

UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah.

PRESIDENT: I don't suppose that's occurred to you?

UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah, a point like that...

PRESIDENT: I think what we do, I think I will make a brief statement today, and I was wondering how late I can make it? 3:30?

ZIEGLER: You can make it at 4:00 or 4:15.

PRESIDENT: Fine, don't make it 3:30.

ZIEGLER: But we can...

PRESIDENT: ...or 4:00, but I'll have to have to get to work on it.

HALDEMAN: We'll call them in.

PRESIDENT: Yeah, call them in and ah, do you think, I should have them, uh, let me ask you this, all of you. Do you want me on television,...

EHRlichman: Yes sir.

PRESIDENT: ...speaking on the evening news?

EHRlichman: That would be my preference.

PRESIDENT: O.k., I'll just walk out.

HALDEMAN: (Unintelligible).

ZIEGLER: I think, ah, depending on the, you know,
REEL 3 BEGINS
statement, though they'll get it to the lab.

PRESIDENT: Don't worry.

ZIEGLER: They can get it on.

PRESIDENT: Oh, sure.

ZIEGLER: That's what I mean, that's what I'm
thinking. I'll get the statement out.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) John (unintelligible).

ZIEGLER: I'll just say you have that flexibility from
3:30 to 4:15.

PRESIDENT: Fine, fine.

REEL 2 ENDS.

Okay. We'll try to get it
out...(Unintelligible).

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ZIEGLER: Yes, sir.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

ZIEGLER: Uh hum.

PRESIDENT: okay (unintelligible)

HALDEMAN: I need you (unintelligible).

EHRlichMAN: Oh, yeah. Ron, I need that uh--

ZIEGLER: This?

EHRlichMAN: Yeah. Where's page one?

ZIEGLER: It's -says page one.

EHRlichMAN: Good work. (Laugh)

PRESIDENT: I wonder, John, (unintelligible) I wonder (unintelligible) unless you sank Doan, basically, if we're putting too much emphasis on the fact (unintelligible) in that office. Understand, (unintelligible), I'm just thinking of what it is worth to us to get him out of the goddamned office. I'd relieve him of his duties.

EHRlichman: Well, the alternative is somehow or other to pass the word to everybody in the place that he's a pariah.

PRESIDENT: That's right.

EHRlichman: I don't know how you do that.

PRESIDENT: What? What do you mean everybody in the place?

EHRlichman: I mean people like, uh, the like the, uh, White House Police. That if they get a subpoena, they shouldn't ask him what to do. The Secret Service, a guy like Dick Howard.

HALDEMAN: Who should they ask?

EHRlichman: Damned good question.

PRESIDENT: Moore.

EHRlichman: Make Moore Acting Counsel? (Laughter) (Unintelligible) discussing what to do in the White House. He has very good judgment.

HALDEMAN: Very good judgment and absolutely no procedural knowledge.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: Garment?

HALDEMAN: He's worse.

PRESIDENT: Yeah. Fielding? (Unintelligible).

HALDEMAN: Hey. Let Fielding be the operative. Say that he can take no action on anything without checking with Moore.

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PRESIDENT: Hw's that sound, John?

EHRlichman: That's good.

PRESIDENT: On this case (unintelligible) Dick Moore.

HALDEMAN: Fielding is to be the front man as Deputy Counsel, but he is to report to

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

HALDEMAN: to Dick Moore.

PRESIDENT: But you see, uh, (unintelligible) I don't think it's worth. (Unintelligible) I just don't know that it's good. Uh, I mean, I mean Dean's sort of a, a, uh, uh, whether that kind of action it is, is worth taking that kind of risk.

EHRlichman: Well, if he's here, people will go to him for advice. I'm, I'm just sure of it.

PRESIDENT: I've told him he's not to give any advice, and he's not to have anything to do with this case at all. All right?

EHRlichman: I don't know. I, maybe I'm being, maybe I'm being unduly, uh, unduly harsh, but, uh, and maybe the negatives are more than, than the, the positives...

PRESIDENT: Let me judge.

EHRlichman: ...it just seems to be that it can be done without breaking any eggs.

PRESIDENT: I can just say, "Well, people are coming in. They're on the White House Police now (unintelligible) and so forth..."

EHRlichman: Say, uh,

PRESIDENT: ...I think if he's there it's going to look strange if he doesn't take leave.

EHRlichman: Well, it puts him in an impossible conflict of-interest situation.

PRESIDENT: Yeah. That's right.

HALDEMAN: That's the problem. He knows what is coming in--what questions are coming, and then he...

PRESIDENT: All right. The second point on hand now with regard to Petersen, uh, that, uh, the, uh -I better get him in and tell him (unintelligible) that's of the highest priority.

HALDEMAN: Yeah, and the no immunity thing.

PRESIDENT: And you just flatly say, "Now this is the way I'm going to handle the matter. (Unintelligible) I cannot let people go simply because charges are made until they are corroborated. That's my decision," and so forth. "And second, I've, I've thought over the immunity thing and I want nobody on the White House staff given immunity. I don't want anybody shown any consideration whatever."

EHRlichman: "This has been a law and order administration (unintelligible) in which we (unintelligible)"

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) Right. "Dean cannot, cannot be in a position (unintelligible) so forth (unintelligible). And third, I'm directing everybody to cooperate. I've already helped him on, on the Liddy (unintelligible) I've tried. They've been told they are not to (unintelligible) the President, but I will continue to, I, I, will not have a number of the White House staff going into the Senate testifying against others." (Unintelligible)

EHRlichman: (Unintelligible). Now, yes, sir, and I think that the fourth point that you should cover with him at the earliest possible time is that if I'm before that Grand Jury and I am asked about Dean's information within the Grand Jury, I will have to say that Dean told me that it came from Petersen.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: And, there's no point in your getting way out .by saying out here to the press, "I'm relying on Henry Petersen as my good right hand," and then have him compromised at a later time.

PRESIDENT: That's right.

HALDEMAN: I think you must, from here on

PRESIDENT: Put a shot across the bow.

HALDEMAN: Well, but also, the one thing I would just urge that you don't, from now on, until this is totally done, which may be never, express confidence in anybody...

PRESIDENT: I know...

HALDEMAN: ...just, for God's sake, don't say, "I know this guy is doing the thing right or anything else." That applies to me, to Ehrlichman...

PRESIDENT: Well, you know how I feel.

HALDEMAN: Yes, but don't say it. I mean it just doesn't serve the, the cause properly. And I don't think you should say it. I think it's a very bad-and you should not about Henry Petersen or John Dean, or anybody else.

PRESIDENT: Ron, now, basically, uh, Ron can handle all that (unintelligible). We're not going to comment on this matter until uh...

HALDEMAN: And Ron must not say it either. Don't let Ron con you into saying, "Well, I have full confidence in Mister what's his name and, uh all the rest."

EHRlichman: I got a name today and I don't know anything about this fellow -but let me advance his name to you, as an alternative. There's a

EHRlichman: lawyer here in town by the named of Herbert
(Continued) Miller. You may know him. He was head of
the criminal division in the Justice
Department, the job Petersen has. He was
there from '61 through '67, under Kennedy
and Johnson, but he's a Republican.

PRESIDENT: Yeah, all right.

EHRlichman: Now, uh, it may be possible to get a fellow
like that...

PRESIDENT: to substitute.

EHRlichman: ...to substitute.

PRESIDENT: I don't know. I guess it's moving too fast.
So you call in a substitute, so he's got to
learn the goddamned case. He's got to make
the bargaining plea with uh, with uh...

EHRlichman: Okay. He reviews it then. He reviews it.
He gets the complete file with the pros and
the cons and he goes through it and he draws
on seven years experience and maybe he comes
over to you and he says, "I've got to call
this shot and, uh, I wonder if you have
anything to add?"

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) come in here and counsel?

EHRlichman: Yes, but as your counsel, he has no control
over, over the prosecution.

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible) Petersen (unintelligible).

EHRlichman: That's right, and he's feeding a bunch of
baloney in my opinion.

PRESIDENT: Well, it's uh, it's all over.
(Unintelligible).

HALDEMAN: He also, of course, apparently, I
understand, told you that Strachan got very
good treatment over there.

PRESIDENT: No, no, no. He told me the contrary.

HALDEMAN: Oh.

PRESIDENT: He said Strachan just got the hell beat out of him.

HALDEMAN: But he did, d-he. He was absolutely astonished. He came out of there and he said it was just beyond belief. He told me that (unintelligible). They threatened his life practically, told him he better hire...
a lawyer.

PRESIDENT: a lawyer.

HALDEMAN: best possible counsel. Provide for support for his wife and children because he'd be going to jail, and that, uh, he was in serious trouble, He would be disbarred. You know, they just...

PRESIDENT: We're playing a rough game.

EHRlichman: Well, what they are trying to do is put him in the hands of an attorney who'll deal for immunity.

HALDEMAN: They are trying to get him to make the same play that Dean and Magruder made.

PRESIDENT: That's right. That's right.

EHRlichman: And I have no doubt...

PRESIDENT: (Unintelligible).

EHRlichman: I have no doubt that they savaged Dean the same way.

PRESIDENT: Yeah.

EHRlichman: ...and they, they scored on him. Uh, well, all I'm saying to you is, I don't think in terms of the kind of stuff they are talking about down there, that it's all that complicated for an experienced man to pick up, so I wouldn't want to think that this guy is indispensable.

PRESIDENT: Yeah, all right but should I make that decision today?

EHRlichman: Well, every day that goes by is, is uh, going to make it that much tougher on somebody new coming in and you got a guy in here that that I wouldn't trust, knowing what I know, and maybe you can, maybe you can discuss that--

PRESIDENT: This guy gets relieved (unintelligible) and, uh says, "Well, I told the President that he ought to fire Haldeman and Ehrlichman and he fires Dean."

EHRlichman: I don't think that he would say that. He's a pro. He's been around this town a long time and he knows that if he said that, you would come right back and say, "No, the reason that I fired him is that I've reason to believe that he is responsible for leaks out of the Grand Jury," and that would destroy him.

PRESIDENT: Okay. Shall I first, uh get that paper back to (unintelligible)?

EHRlichman: Yeah, I'll get it right back.

PRESIDENT: Second, shall I, shall I get Dean down first?

EHRlichman: I would.

PRESIDENT: And I'd tell him that--

EHRlichman: Tell him you are going to make a statement and that it is not going to refer to him.

PRESIDENT: Yep.

EHRlichman: And, that uh--

PRESIDENT: All right. Fine.

EHRlichman: Or anybody, and that you're going to deal with the people at the White House on an individual basis. Individual basis you're dealing with him (unintelligible).

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HALDEMAN: Give Petersen a call maybe first
(unintelligible) immunity (unintelligible).

PRESIDENT: Yeah. Get Petersen in first. Uh, just, uh,
call and tell Petersen to (unintelligible).

HALDEMAN: All right.