

Conversation No. 639-30
Oval Office
P, JNM, HRH and JDE
December 21, 1971, 6:07 PM—6:59 PM
[HRH and JDE enter at 6:09 PM].

Rosen Transcript modified By Len Colodny Using "Nixon Era Center's" CD
ROM Version 11/15/01

First few minutes RN And JNM are discussing Nixon's vacation in Bermuda,
from which just minute earlier he had just returned.

MITCHELL: Don't worry Mr. President, I'm not about to [INAUDIBLE]

LAUGHS

NIXON: [INAUDIBLE]

MITCHELL: [INAUDIBLE] Did you really burn the burn bag?

NIXON: The answer, to be honest with you is

[NATIONAL SECURITY DELETION 1000 Hz Tone]

NIXON: [INAUDIBLE] son of a bitch [INAUDIBLE] What were the findings that they saw?

EHRlichman: Well we have a payload of *incriminatory and uh,*

NIXON: Good.

EHRlichman: It took a funny bounce....

NIXON: Good [INAUDIBLE] White House?

EHRlichman: *Yes, we* found more than we thought we would.

NIXON: Good.

EHRlichman: Jack Anderson *ran* columns *actually* four of them *now* including today

NIXON: Uh-hum.

EHRlichman: Excerpts of top-secret documents,

MITCHELL: *criminal actions,*

EHRlichman: *And they're involved in CIA back channels [INAUDIBLE] raw notes of WSAG meetings [INAUDIBLE] and so forth. And the first hour we were aware that we had broken the yeoman and through Dave Young, used to be [INAUDIBLE] right hand man [INAUDIBLE]*

NIXON: [INAUDIBLE]

EHRlichman: Yes.

Mitchell: Quite mature for a young fellow.

EHRlichman: [INAUDIBLE]

Mitchell: Quite mature for a young fellow.

[INAUDIBLE CROSS TALK]

LAUGHS

Mitchell: [INAUDIBLE]

EHRlichman: [INAUDIBLE] They took documents that Anderson had accepted and by figuring out the destination of these documents, they were able to pin point, that there were really only one place in the whole Federal Government, where all those documents were available, that was here in the Joint Chiefs of Staff Liaison Office, in the National Security Council, and there are only two men in that office, one the Admiral, and one the yeoman. So they began interviewing both of them, and they polygraphed both of them. The yeoman obviously is the guy who knew Jack Anderson, he had dinner with Jack Anderson the previous Sunday. His wife and Jack Anderson's wife were Mormons and friends and were doing things together so on and so forth. He had lived in India for two years, so this is probably about the India/Pakistan thing. So there was motive, opportunity, and access to the whole thing.

NIXON: How in the name of God do we have a yeoman having access to that kind of thing?

EHRlichman: Well, he's the key man. He is the, he's the fellow that typed all the memcons, the memoranda, the conversations, who followed through [INAUDIBLE]

HALDEMAN: Everybody has—

Mitchell: He's traveled with Henry.

EHRlichman: He's traveled with Haig.

Mitchell: Did he go to China?

EHRlichman: No, but he went to Indonesia with Henry and Vietnam with Haig. And in all Haig's dealings [inaudible]. So he's been right at, he's been right at the precipice. Now, he works for this Admiral Welander, who is the Joint Chiefs of Staff liaison man. Before him there was an aide-de-camp in the office. [INAUDIBLE] polygraphs [INAUDIBLE] And he has refused to admit to turning the documents over to Anderson but he is still in the office. He had access, motive [INAUDIBLE] and he may be the only man [INAUDIBLE] in the whole staff [INAUDIBLE] obviously [INAUDIBLE]

NIXON: We must be cautious—very, very cautious.

EHRlichman: We are.

NIXON: Right.

EHRlichman: [INAUDIBLE] secrets, but in the course of the polygraph, he was asked whether or not he had ever photoed documents and stolen briefs [INAUDIBLE]

[INAUDIBLE]

MITCHELL: Very serious.

NIXON: How do you fellows think [INAUDIBLE]

EHRlichman: He's the expert [INAUDIBLE] he's schooled, he's trained, he spent his whole life reading the, the words [INAUDIBLE] prepared [INAUDIBLE]

MITCHELL: He gets immersed in the subject matter.

NIXON: [INAUDIBLE]

ERHLICHMAN: No,

NIXON: [INAUDIBLE]

MITCHELL: [INAUDIBLE]

EHRlichman: The, the uh, the interrogator [INAUDIBLE] said I agree with the polygraph operator [INAUDIBLE] Welander [INAUDIBLE]. The guy broke down and cried. Then he says, I can't answer that question without the permission of Admiral Welander, the liaison officer [INAUDIBLE] thirteen months [INAUDIBLE]. So then it all came out. He has under the expressed arrangement with Captain Robinson and under the implied approval of his supervisor, the Admiral, he has systematically stolen documents out of Henry's briefcase, Haig's briefcase, people's desks—anyplace and everyplace in the NSC apparatus that he could get his hands on—and has duplicated them and turned them over to the Joint Chiefs, through his boss. This has been going on now for about thirteen months.

NIXON: Don't expect anything out of these [inaudible] long time itself! Is Henry aware of this?

EHRlichman: I'm sure not.

NIXON: Is Haig aware of this?

EHRlichman: I don't know. I suspect Haig may be aware, by some kind of back-channel basis. Because after this came out and it was reduced to writing by the interrogator, uh Young was advised by the interrogator that he was having some trouble with his superiors, and that he was going to have to excise his report to leave that material out [INAUDIBLE] Stewart, the interrogator, the investigator over at the Pentagon.

MITCHELL: [INAUDIBLE]

EHRlichman: And we have an unexpurgated version of the report. We do have the black binder, signed by the interrogator. But, you ask if Haig knows; I don't know if Haig knows. But, uh if this thing runs true to form, undoubtedly, his radar has picked this up by now. But this guy admits to taking and duplicating and turning over to the Joint Chiefs' liaison man not only—

NIXON: [Inaudible]...

HALDEMAN: [Asks about Yeoman Radford's responses under interrogation in a way that suggests HRH misunderstood much of the foregoing; words to the effect of "So Radford is or is not saying he turned over the documents?" "No he is—oh, yes, oh, yes," EHRlichman: answers, in the manner of "on the contrary"]

NIXON: For thirteen months.

EHRlichman: Thirteen months. Contingency plans, political briefs, troop movements, behind-the-scenes topics, security conferences [inaudible], et cetera. [INAUDIBLE] interrogation.

NIXON: [INAUDIBLE]

EHRlichman: It would have been before Friday, I think this came on Friday.

NIXON: I thought that we were going [INAUDIBLE] Thursday.

EHRlichman: Well this is Tuesday you [INAUDIBLE]

NIXON: [INAUDIBLE]

[INAUDIBLE CROSSTALK]

EHRlichman: [INAUDIBLE] I saw the Defense Department interrogation and sent Dave over to talk to John, and uh he and I talked today. It was his feeling that you ought to know about this before we get any further involved. We had been working on this with the idea that perhaps they can link him to the Jack Anderson—that had been our original goal. Then it developed, of course, that this, this, this, this sailor was the very storehouse of information of all kinds and that he reads and retains everything that comes through. He testified here that he knew about Henry's secret negotiations with the North Vietnamese.

NIXON: Oh!

EHRlichman: And uh, uh he often wrote a response to [INAUDIBLE] Now, this guy, obviously, could be court-martialed or he is given immunity and the whistle in his hands, or something to that. But, we approached him, he [INAUDIBLE] career [INAUDIBLE] He put in for a transfer out of here, which was denied, because he was a key man.

NIXON: Now, key to whom?

EHRlichman: Key to obviously [INAUDIBLE] the military.

[INAUDIBLE CROSSTALK]

EHRlichman: [INAUDIBLE] Oh yes, oh yes.

[INAUDIBLE CROSSTALK]

MITCHELL: [INAUDIBLE] How, how very much does he

EHRlichman: He, he has enough to [INAUDIBLE] NSA

[NATIONAL SECURITY DELETION 1000 Hz Tone]

NIXON: [INAUDIBLE]

MITCHELL: How long have you been involved [INAUDIBLE]

EHRlichman: [INAUDIBLE] I'm sure not. [INAUDIBLE]

[INAUDIBLE CROSSTALK]

EHRlichman: Oh yes, that [INAUDIBLE] is the one that called me up first [INAUDIBLE]
[INAUDIBLE CROSSTALK]

HALDEMAN: We're would you like to go to [INAUDIBLE] answered, the whole thing is on the second floor.

[INAUDIBLE CROSSTALK]

EHRlichman: [INAUDIBLE] I told him that we thought we knew [INAUDIBLE] he verbatim knows what everybody says.

MITCHELL: Written or [INAUDIBLE] material here?

EHRlichman: Its all written up [INAUDIBLE] he handled almost everything [INAUDIBLE] Pentagon, NSC, everything. And uh he has Xeroxed this material over to Anderson.

NIXON: Yes.

EHRlichman: Now, the way we settle up with Anderson.

NIXON: Correct.

EHRlichman: We will slow down [INAUDIBLE] that this fellow was obviously very hot [INAUDIBLE] until we shut the whole thing down. [INAUDIBLE]

NIXON: [INAUDIBLE] I don't prefer an interrogation.

EHRlichman: You don't?

NIXON: [INAUDIBLE]

MITCHELL: No you don't.

[INAUDIBLE CROSSTALK]

MITCHELL: [Inaudible] put him under arrest?

EHRlichman: Well, we could. [INAUDIBLE] But the, the Joint Chiefs' liaison office is over here in EOB, and it's right in the NSC complex. It's pretty nice, this Captain Robinson, who, Dave got, on the first day Dave came to work, said: "Now Dave, really you're eyes and ears of the Pentagon. You can trust me entirely. Uh, my job is to get you fellows information out of the Pentagon." It turned out to be, in effect, a reverse agent—working for the Pentagon inside here. That, that office, it seems to me uh possibly is a clear and present danger to the, the whole security as it might exist at the NSC. John has suggestions as to how to proceed in this that I think are very sound. [INAUDIBLE]

MITCHELL: Well, Mr. President, I'd like to comment that this thing goes right into the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Undoubtedly they'd know if it's coming they participated in it..[inaudible]...First thing you're—

NIXON: [Inaudible] prosecution of the Joint Chiefs

MITCHELL: I agree with you, but we have to take it from there as to what this would lead to if you pursued this by way of prosecuting Moorer. Even a public confrontation, you against the Joint Chiefs aligned on that side directly against you. And the—what has been done has been done. I think that the important thing is to paper this thing over.

NIXON: Hmmph!

MITCHELL: Uh, This way—first of all, get that liaison office the hell out of NSC and put it back at the Pentagon.

NIXON: Correct.

MITCHELL: Secondly, to get a security officer into the NSC.

NIXON: Correct. Well what about Henry Kissinger?

MITCHELL: Well, I think **that** whoever goes in there is going to have to ride herd not only on the rest of the staff, but on Henry. It turns out that one of these most important memorandums here that Henry had was lost, and that somebody just handed him another copy. He shouldn't have even *had* another copy. This came out today. And with respect to the Joint chiefs, you have to get, in my opinion, this guy Admiral Welander the hell out of there, by way of a signal. That way you can transfer him to Kokomo or Indiana, or anywhere we want to have him, along, of course, with this yeoman. And I think the best thing to do is for me—and we'll leave Laird aside for a moment—but for me to sit down with Tom Moorer, and point out what this scene is that's been going on, and it's the end of the road. The liaison is going back to the Pentagon; if they want to make calls over here [fine]. And there's a security quotient going into the NSC, and this ballgame's over with. Now, ah, this would, having exacerbated—discipline this admiral that's been involved in this—I don't know what should do about Robinson, if anything. Where is he off to? Is he [inaudible], is he—

EHRlichman: [Inaudible] he briefed us all on Cambodia. Well [inaudible, then national security deletions]

NIXON: [Inaudible]

EHRlichman: It looks very grim [inaudible]...

NIXON: [Inaudible] these leaks [inaudible]...

EHRlichman: [Inaudible] who, both Robinson and Welander knew that he had a social relationship with Jack Anderson.

HALDEMAN: It's almost as if they, they meant to do something.

NIXON: [Inaudible; question asked] That's what I know. But they ought to [inaudible] God [inaudible] that was dishonest.

[Inaudible—speaker unknown]: [...] thing on that story...

MITCHELL: I know [inaudible]...suggesting he put out the whole story of the fleet that run through the Straits of Malacca, up into the Bay of Bengal.

EHRlichman: Why do you ask?

MITCHELL: Because the yeoman served in India, he married a flight [attendant?] in India [inaudible].

[Inaudible crosstalk, followed by a brief break in the original recording]

NIXON: Oh, he's the pro-[inaudible]?

[Inaudible]

MITCHELL: Well, in addition to that, his association with Jack Anderson. Uh, Anderson would obviously know what he was doing, and how he was working, and just pushed things until he got it.

EHRlichman: [Inaudible] Anderson guilty of anything?

MITCHELL: Yes.

EHRlichman: What?

MITCHELL: He's guilty of possession of these documents.

NIXON: Can we really prosecute, let's say, the person [inaudible]...

MITCHELL: You can prosecute 'em under the publication. But for the possession of them, I don't know if we need to buy that. But if you start to open up—

[Inaudible]

MITCHELL: —if you start opening up on Anderson—assuming you did make a case, turned this guy, give him immunity and so forth—then Lord knows where this is going to lead to.

NIXON: Yeah.

MITCHELL: Because he's [Radford's] going to come out with a story, "Well, I gave it," this business with Admiral Welander, "and he's had all of this," and the Joint Chiefs and all the rest of it.

NIXON: Well, it blows the Joint chiefs right out of the Pentagon through the roof of the Pentagon. Right?

EHRlichman: Right, it ruptures your relationship

MITCHELL: What you do really is—and there's some breaking news.

NIXON: I am afraid Haig must have known about this operation.

EHRlichman: I'm not sure if Haig was in on the operation.

NIXON: It seems unlikely he wouldn't, he wouldn't have known.

EHRlichman: I'm not sure of that. You see, Haig took this guy to Vietnam with him, consulted with him, reposed confidence in him. And I think they *could* have been in it. But I suspect that the stakes—this whole practice, coupled with each [of] the facts displayed, we got a problem, be advised. [Inaudible] that would be my thinking. But I don't know that. [Inaudible]. But I *don't* know that. I'm just—because there are—[inaudible]...

NIXON: [Inaudible]

[Inaudible crosstalk]

MITCHELL: He was at Normandy, you know, and so was Jack Anderson.

[Inaudible]

NIXON: [Inaudible] Anderson [inaudible]...

[Inaudible crosstalk]

EHRlichman: [...] focus on how you, how you see your name on the list under Tom Moorer. What are you going to do about this man?

MITCHELL: [Inaudible] also someplace.

NIXON: [Inaudible]?

MITCHELL: Yup [inaudible]. You wouldn't [inaudible]... You can't, without breaking this thing up. 'Cause when the pressure gets on him, it's going to go right up through the channels.

EHRlichman: I lost more sleep than I [inaudible] on what to do with this guy. And I have finally come to the conclusion that you can't touch him. All right? And [inaudible] because it hurts our chief executive [inaudible]...

[Inaudible for one or two minutes; some discussion of "Kissinger"]

EHRlichman: [inaudible] over to an embassy or what the hell to do with him.

MITCHELL: What, what transfer did he put in for?

EHRlichman: [Brief inaudible portion followed by national security deletion] Now, I don't know what to do with this bird. [Pause] But, uh, my inclination is direct them that you not do anything with a punitive nature to it, or appear to fire them all.

NIXON: I agree.

EHRlichman: [Inaudible]

NIXON: I think we've got to, uh, uh [pause] find some [inaudible]... I don't understand, either, the—you said there was some curiousness as to how even Haig was—he had signed off on this. I mean, I don't, I don't think the leaks are—

EHRlichman: I understand.

NIXON: [Inaudible] the stuff with the Chinese.

HALDEMAN: I don't know how he knew that.

MITCHELL: I don't know how you really find out. I guess Haig had had most of the information they know. But it would have, uh—

NIXON: [Inaudible] But Jesus, I mean, taking stuff out of Henry's briefcase! I'm sure Haig would never approve of that.

MITCHELL: I would agree with that.

HALDEMAN: [Inaudible] he picks up Haig's briefcase—

EHRlichman: [Inaudible] briefcase [inaudible] all these people [inaudible] Sonnenfeldt, Kissinger's secretaries, Haig, Negroponte, Dick Smyser, Kennedy, Jack Darcy, Murphy [inaudible]...

NIXON: But I think we've got to get started on the strategy you suggested [inaudible]...

MITCHELL: What about Laird?

EHRlichman: Now Laird knows about the yeoman. He called me and said that he knew [inaudible—some stealing?] was going on. He was going to see if [inaudible]...

NIXON: Laird is another of these bunch [inaudible—that's no good?].

EHRlichman: You know that General Pursley [inaudible]...He's a Laird friend, so he's not loyal.

[Inaudible for perhaps a minute]

EHRlichman: Now I don't know about Don Hughes's situation. But Don's the only guy to whom I can turn to find out how much Haig really knows. He's in a position to find out that stuff.

[Speaker unknown]: Don's position is central, you know [inaudible]...

EHRlichman: And he does have some.

NIXON: He does not.

HALDEMAN: He does, sir.

MITCHELL: The, then—

[Inaudible crosstalk]

MITCHELL: —you'd have to belong to the club to find who's—

EHRlichman: [Inaudible]

NIXON: [Inaudible, followed by national security deletion].

HALDEMAN: Now Zumwalt was involved in this..

[Inaudible crosstalk]

EHRlichman: ..you got an Admiral, a yeoman, Moorer, Zumwalt...., Zumwalt was the recipient of some documents ...

NIXON: I think you ought to press that when you talk to Moorer.

JDE[inaudible]...I think that ought to be investigated when you talk to Moorer. [Pause] You don't agree?

MITCHELL: No. Because this will bear a confrontation that I don't think you need.

NIXON: Well, all right. [Inaudible] Know what I mean? [Inaudible] particularly, particularly when Moorer [inaudible]...

[Inaudible for one or two minutes; discussion of “Kissinger’s briefcase”; then EHRlichman: reads aloud from, presumably, Stewart’s report, saying things like: “The subject then stated that...”]

MITCHELL: He says that he has only taken stuff home—how would that come out? [Inaudible crosstalk] That came out all right on the polygraph?

[Discussion of the Radford-Anderson relationship]

EHRlichman: You know, he’s very bright and *very* precise, and—

MITCHELL: He handled the interrogation, from what I hear—I haven’t read the transcript. But he handled it just the way a propo—con-man would have.

EHRlichman: Yeah, yeah.

MITCHELL: [Inaudible] he recognized [inaudible] this is all circumstantial [inaudible]...

EHRlichman: Hr answered the questions [inaudible]...Of course, you know, they interrogated him for three days straight.

MITCHELL: Well, he had a great little ballgame [inaudible] whether he’s involved any other people in this.

EHRlichman: And he realizes how he’s opened up the door to this whole joint Chiefs thing. Admiral Welander was asked about this. He refuses to respond to the interrogator’s questions, saying that he had a personal and confidential relationship with Henry Kissinger and Al Haig, including responding to those kinds of questions.

NIXON: The other thing that.... has to be reckoned with. Very hard.Kissinger and Haig..... They must be told that I know the whole thing. They must be told that on any subject [pounding desk], don’t let them get off the hook, either of them, or—God, let them think, let them think, that the son-of-a-bitch broke down and told all the other stuff, too. Let themblaming the wrong people[inaudible]...Do you understand?

MITCHELL: And John’ll get a candidate for this security officer in the NSC.

EHRlichman: No. No. [Inaudible—Chuck Traynor?], who set up our security operation in [inaudible—Key Biscayne?], colonel in the Air Force.

[National security deletion]

EHRlichman: And if [Traynor?] had any qualms about turning fink on his staff, he’d have told me right then. He went to work, and he got the good on this guy, [inaudible].

[Inaudible for approximately one minute, followed by a deletion]

HALDEMAN: Traynor is a Airforce Officer who was here in the White House when we came in ,as the President’s man to look at all the....over all to see who was screwing who.

MITCHELL: Wasn’t he certified to by don Hughes?

EHRlichman: He’s fine for me.
[Inaudible crosstalk]

NIXON: [Inaudible] I’m worried that if it got to Haig, Haig would tell Henry [inaudible].....

.... Why not?

MITCHELL: It's not going to hurt anyone.

EHRlichman: See if we can put a tap and surveillance on the guy

MITCHELL: We could do that.....

NIXON: Do that.....

JNM Is he confined to his home?

EHRlichman: No

MITCHELL: He's not.....his military stuff [Inaudible]

EHRlichman:if he's smart enough to tap, then he would know he'd be tapped.....

MITCHELL: And you may have incoming calls to indicate who's interested in the problem.

NIXON: You might get something you never know if the guys smart, his wife may be dumb enough andyou might learn a few things, I get a feeling we need to find outI want to see what bubbles up at the NSC...

MITCHELL: Well, I'd be—you don't think that [inaudible]—but I think that Welander and Robinson are the ones that ought to have action taken against them, so that the word gets out and that Moorer would be charged with doing this.

EHRlichman: If that remains to be done, then why don't you do that?

MITCHELL: Well, the minute you do that, the ballgame's over, and then you finally go to the security of the NSC, and that's the end of it.

[Pause]

NIXON: [Inaudible] Henry is not a good security risk.

MITCHELL: He's not a good security risk, the way he runs that office.

EHRlichman: Well, there are all kinds of odd bounces to this thing now. There's a relief man who takes... place. One of the questions they asked him was whether or not he knew Jack Anderson. No .Do you know anyone who knows Jack Anderson. No. So that was the end of that. We came back over here to see Admiral Welander, and said sir I need to report to you that the yeoman knows Jack Anderson.....

NIXON: [Inaudible]

MITCHELL: Well this is why they did the service argument. You can expect that some of them that are close to these officers—[inaudible]

EHRlichman: [Inaudible]

MITCHELL: Well, you know—

EHRlichman: [Inaudible]

MITCHELL: Well, not until you're ready to move against Welander and whoever else. I think that's the problem, because the important thing, in my way of thinking, is to stop this Joint chiefs of Staff operation, and to buck up the security over here.

NIXON: Right.

MITCHELL: And if, if I had to order Welander out to Kokomo or wherever it is—What you do with Robinson, I don't know—then they have taken recognition of this, and they in effect are admitting to this operation.

NIXON: All right. [Inaudible] day of Christmas.

MITCHELL: That's great. I'll be out at the Fiesta Bowl in Phoenix.

[Inaudible crosstalk]

MITCHELL: No, I'm inclined to think that there may be a—

NIXON: [Inaudible] others [inaudible]...

EHRlichman: ...interrogations have been going on..... He knows that this guy...he knows he knows..... Welander was asked about it, and do you know that this man, it is true it turned out he was one of you. And he (Welander) says I have a confidential relationship with Haig and Kissinger"

MITCHELL: that's, that's where he fucked it up.

NIXON: Well.... just knock that out of the ballpark, stop that relationship

MITCHELL: Well, they, Robinson and Welander—is that his name? These are the two culprits involved, when you go back to the way the scenario reads, where this yeoman was told to keep his eyes open and get whatever he could. They are the ones responsible for this. And the question is—two questions. Number one: Where do you put Laird in this? Do you consult with Laird, and tell him what you're going to do,

NIXON: No.

MITCHELL: —or how do you handle Laird? Or do you just go to Moorer on your behalf?

NIXON: Go to Moorer on my behalf. You handle this directly with Moorer. Don't tell Laird. Laird will go off and screw around and then that's one way it will blow. [Inaudible] and I'd consult Henry, see what we do [inaudible]...about what should be done.

MITCHELL: Now what do you want done with Welander?

NIXON: Huh?

MITCHELL: What do you want done with Welander—other than kick him out of the EOB? You want him transferred out?

NIXON: Transfer him the hell out of here. [Inaudible]

MITCHELL: I agree with you.

[Inaudible crosstalk]

NIXON: The main thing is that, the main thing is that, it's to me that reason that, He—had—to—know—that he was getting stuff from Kissinger's and Haig's briefcase. That—is—wrong! Understand? I'm just saying that's wrong. Do you agree?

MITCHELL: No question about it, that the whole concept of having this yeoman get into this affair and start to get this stuff into the Joint Chiefs of Staff is just like coming in and robbing your desk.

NIXON: Yes it is.

HALDEMAN: The thing that disgusts me about this is, if they'll do that—

NIXON: Yeah.

HALDEMAN: —what else are they doing? You know, military drivers, military gals, military everything around here.

NIXON: Yup, yup, yup, yup.

HALDEMAN: Christ. We've all used this office. [Inaudible] If you called one of these [inaudible] into your office [inaudible] White House mess [inaudible] go back to the Johnson days they were [inaudible]...

MITCHELL: Only one [inaudible]...

NIXON: [Inaudible] Al Haig [inaudible]...

MITCHELL: I think it might be interesting to see what Al does. [Inaudible]

[Inaudible crosstalk]

MITCHELL: Let me, let me—

NIXON: Let me just say: there is a federal offense of the highest order here. And you have reported it to the President. The President says he can't discuss it. And the Attorney General.....

MITCHELL: Mr. President, [inaudible] suppose I interrogation of Welander on this thing?

EHRlichman: Well, [inaudible] I, I think that's indicated....What about telling Henry that Welander refused to co-operate, on the grounds of his personal relationship with Henry. That Henry is to call Welander and dissolve that relationship.

HALDEMAN: [Inaudible]

MITCHELL: That's it exactly

NIXON: Why don't you tell Henry that.....

MITCHELL: Tell Henry if he gets that much, it'll wreck 'em. And then....

NIXON: I don't want Henry to know, though that this yeoman has put it on to Anderson yet.....Don't you agree?

EHRlichman: I just think..... I am sure Haig has told Henry that much.

NIXON: Does Haig know all this? Hold on....my point.....does Haig know he stole from his briefcase?.....

[Inaudible crosstalk]

MITCHELL: John, how about—we don't know what the hell that security officer over there [at the Pentagon] is doing, other than excising the record. Why not have Martin come over and interrogate Welander?

EHRlichman: Well, [inaudible]...

MITCHELL: Well, I'd do it. And when you get through with him, go back to the yeoman.

[Inaudible crosstalk; discussion of the Alger Hiss case]

NIXON: "To the best of my recollection, I can't recall. To the best of my recollection, I do not remember. To the best of my recollection I do not remember.....to critical answers.."

EHRlichman: [Inaudible] He was very precise about the things he didn't have. That he went certain places, and did certain things, certain circumstances, this guy was trained. He can tell you exactly the sequence in which he Xeroxed things He has total recall.

MITCHELL: I think this Welander thing is good because it is going to get right into the middle of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

EHRlichman:But I think what we ought to do here is have Henry call Welander..... [inaudible]—

NIXON: Yeah.

EHRlichman: and say, "There's nothing in our relationship that precludes you from answering any questions that are put to you." [Inaudible]

NIXON: [Inaudible] I don't want Henry to raise this subject with me—or he's out..... and get a handle on Moorer?

MITCHELL: Well, let's—let's let this sit a while, as you suggest, and then let's take him on.

EHRlichman: I'll get Welander tomorrow.

NIXON: Good.....I wish I could sit in on it myself..... [Inaudible for about twenty seconds; end of conversation]

* * *

[Finding Aid for Conversation No. 639-30]

Conversation No. 639-30
Date: December 21, 1971
Time: 6:07 pm - 6:59 pm
Location: Oval Office

The President met with John N. Mitchell.

President's schedule

- Meeting in Bermuda
 - Weather
 - Cooperation
 - France, West Germany
 - Public reaction
 - Edward R.G. Heath
 - Work involved
 - Willy Brandt
- President's past Christmas plans
 - Eisaku Sato

H. R. ("Bob") HALDEMAN: and John D. EHRLICHMAN: entered at 6:09 pm.

[General conversation]

President's schedule

- Swearing-in of Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist
 - Timing
 - Wallace H. Johnson

Unknown person

- American Broadcasting Company [ABC]

President's schedule

BEGIN WITHDRAWN ITEM NO. 2

[Personal Returnable]

[Duration: 7s]

END WITHDRAWN ITEM NO. 2

President's schedule

- Willy Brandt

Jack N. Anderson columns

- Use of classified documents
 - Central Intelligence Agency [CIA] reports
 - India-Pakistan
 - Washington Special Actions Group [WSAG]
 - Egil G. ("Bud") Krogh, Jr.
 - David R. Young, Jr.
 - Henry A. Kissinger
 - Maturity
 - Leak
 - Source
 - Joint Chiefs of Staff [JCS]
 - National Security Council [NSC]

- Yeoman Charles E. Radford
 - Relationship with Anderson
 - Gen. Alexander M. Haig, Jr.
 - Experiences in Vietnam
- Polygraph
- Adm. Robert O. Welander
 - JCS
- Unknown person
- Radford
 - Experience
 - Polygraph
 - Question on stolen documents
 - Administrator
 - R[embrandt] C. ("Hugh") Robinson
 - Welander
 - Kissinger
 - Haig
 - NSC
 - JCS
 - Length of activity
 - Kissinger
 - Haig
- Young
 - Report
 - Interrogator
 - Excision
 - Department of Defense [DOD]
- Haig
 - Knowledge
- Source
 - Activities
 - JCS liaison officer
- Types
 - Studies
- Young
 - DOD interrogation
 - Conversation with Mitchell
- Anderson
- Radford
 - Knowledge
 - Kissinger and North Vietnamese negotiations
 - Possible court martial
 - Administration strategy

BEGIN WITHDRAWN ITEM NO. 4
 [National Security]
 [Duration: 50s]

INDIA

END WITHDRAWN ITEM NO. 4

- Richard M. Helms
- Haig
 - Call to EHRlichman:
- Kissinger
 - Informed by EHRlichman:
- Radford
 - Access
 - WSAG meetings
 - The Pentagon and NSC
 - Methods used
 - Phone tap
 - Possible arrest
- JCS liaison office
 - Location
 - Executive Office Building [EOB]
- NSC
- Robinson
- Young
 - DOD
- JCS
- Prosecution
- Strategy proposed
 - JCS liaison officer
 - Proposed relocation
 - Need for security officer
 - Kissinger
 - JCS
 - Transfer of Welander
 - Transfer of Radford
 - Adm. Thomas H. Moorer
 - Possible discussions with Mitchell
 - Melvin R. Laird
 - Discipline of Welander, Robinson
 - Necessity for discipline
 - Robinson
 - Cambodia briefing
- [Unintelligible]
- JCS
- Story
 - US Naval action in Straits of Malacca, Bay of Bengal
- Radford's relationship with Anderson
 - Welander
 - Robinson
 - Previous knowledge
- Radford's experience
 - India
 - Anderson
- Anderson
 - Possible prosecution
 - Possession of documents
 - Welander
 - JCS

- Haig
 - Knowledge
 - Tour of Vietnam with Radford
 - Polygraph of Radford
- Anderson
 - Normandy
 - Parents
- Radford
 - Age
 - Religious faith
 - Moorer
 - Possible transfer
 - JCS
- Kissinger
- Anderson columns
 - Examination
 - Young
- Robinson
 - Relationship with Radford

BEGIN WITHDRAWN ITEM NO. 8

[Privacy]

[Duration: 41s]

END WITHDRAWN ITEM NO. 8

- Radford
 - Call to Moorer
- Haig
 - Involvement
 - People's Republic of China [PRC]
 - JCS
 - Kissinger's briefcase
- NSC staff
 - Helmut ("Hal") Sonnenfeldt
 - Kissinger
 - Secretaries
 - Haig
 - John Negroponte
 - Richard Smyser
 - Col. Richard T. Kennedy
 - Jack D'Arcy [sp?]
 - [Forename unknown] Murphy
 - Kennedy
- Strategy
 - Laird
 - EHRlichman's telephone conversation
 - John Glenn [?]
 - Gen. [Forename unknown] Percy [?]

- Radford
 - JCS
 - Possible view of India
- Maj. Gen. James D. ("Don") Hughes's knowledge
- Haig

BEGIN WITHDRAWN ITEM NO. 5
[National Security]
[Duration: 26s]

INTELLIGENCE

END WITHDRAWN ITEM NO. 5

- Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt, Jr.
 - Involvement
- Radford
- Moorer
- Zumwalt
- Mitchell's forthcoming meeting with Moorer
 - Mitchell's view
 - President's presence
- Documents from Kissinger's briefcase
 - JCS
 - Robinson
 - EOB
 - Welander
- Moorer
- Radford
 - Possession of documents
 - Interrogation
 - Results
- Welander
 - Kissinger
 - Haig
 - Kissinger
 - Leak
- Candidate for NSC Security Officer
 - Charles Sither
 - Ability

BEGIN WITHDRAWN ITEM NO. 6
[Privacy]
[Duration: 4s]

END WITHDRAWN ITEM NO. 6

BEGIN WITHDRAWN ITEM NO. 7

[Privacy]

[Duration: 4s]

END WITHDRAWN ITEM NO. 7

- Location
 - Certification
 - Hughes
- Haig
- Kissinger
- Radford
 - Tap
 - Surveillance
- NSC
 - Welander
 - Robinson
 - Possible action taken
 - Moorer
 - Strategy
- Kissinger
 - Security
 - Office
- Interrogation
 - Anderson
 - Welander
 - Laird
 - Election
- JCS
 - Security
 - Interrogation
 - Welander knowledge
 - Haig and Kissinger
 - Robinson
 - Involvement
- Laird
- Meeting with Moorer
- Welander
 - Transfer from EOB
 - Kissinger's briefcase
 - Radford
 - Relationship with JCS
- JCS
 - Other possible activities
 - Moorer

- Lyndon B. Johnson Administration
- Recommendations to Mitchell
 - Strategy
 - Kissinger
 - Welander
 - Possible interrogation
 - Anderson
 - Haig
- Security officer
 - Unknown activities
- John B. Martin [?]
- Welander
 - Interrogation
- Alger Hiss case
 - Compared to Radford interrogation
 - Knowledge
- Welander interrogation
 - JCS
 - Relationship to Kissinger
 - Strategy
- Moorer
- Haig
- Kissinger

The President, Mitchell, HALDEMAN:, and EHRLICHMAN: left at 6:59 pm.