

NIXON'S OVAL OFFICE TAPE TRANSCRIPTS

(Marihuana and War on Drug excerpts)

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May 13, 1971, between 10:30am and 12:30pm -- Oval Office
Conversation 498-5-- meeting with Nixon, Haldeman and Ehrlichman

[The President and his advisors were discussing a recent episode of "All in the Family," a television show on CBS. President Nixon was offended by the show's favorable treatment of homosexuals.]

RN: "But, nevertheless, the point that I make is that God damn it, I do not think that you glorify on public television homosexuality. The reason you don't glorify it John anymore than you glorify, uh, uh, uh, whores. Now we all know people who have whores and we all know that people are just, uh, do that, we all have weaknesses and so forth and so on, but God damn it, what do you think that does to kids? What do you think that does to 11 and 12 year old boys when they see that? Why is it that the Scouts, the, why is it that the Boys Clubs, we were there, we constantly had to clean up the staffs to keep the Goddamned fags out of it. Because, not because of them, they can go out and do anything they damn please, [unintelligible] all those kids? You know, there's a little tendency among them all. Well by God can I tell you it outraged me. Not for any moral reason. Most people are outraged for moral reasons, I, it outraged me because I don't want to see this country go that way. You know there are countries -- You ever see what happened, you know what happened to the Greeks. Homosexuality destroyed them. Sure, Aristotle was a homo, we all know that, so was Socrates."

JE: "He never had the influence that television had."

RN: "Do you know what happened to the Romes, Romans? The last six Roman emperors were fags. The last six. Nero had a public wedding to a boy. Yeah. And they'd [unintelligible]. You know that. You know what happened to the Popes? It's all right that, po-po-Popes were laying the nuns, that's been going on for years, centuries, but, when the popes, when the Catholic Church went to hell, in, I don't know, three or four centuries ago, it was homosexual. And finally it had to be cleaned out. Now, that's what's happened to Britain, it happened earlier to France. And let's look at the strong societies. The Russians. God damn it, they root them out, they don't let them around at all. You know what I mean? I don't know what they do with them. Now, we are allowing this in this country when we show [unintelligible]. Dope? Do you think the Russians allow dope? Hell no. Not if they can allow, not if they can catch it, they send them up. You see, homosexuality, dope, immorality in

general: These are the enemies of strong societies. That's why the Communists and the left-wingers are pushing the stuff, they're trying to destroy us."

Unknown: "Sure, sure. Yep."

RN: "And I don't know, I, we talk oh and I and Moynihan will disagree with this, Mitchell disagree with this, [unintelligible] will and all the rest. But God damn it, we have got to stand up to these people."

[Later on in this conversation tape, Bob Haldeman left, and George Schultz entered with Chicago Mayor Richard Daley. The following is from that segment. The President and Daley are talking about how Chicago approaches drugs.]

RN: "Well, let me tell you one thing that just happened here because it probably wasn't, I'm sure it wasn't in the press here, I had a press conference in California which was not televised, but, I was asked about marijuana because a study is being made by a, group, [unintelligible] the government. Now, my position is flat-out on that. I am against legalizing marijuana. Now I'm against legalizing marijuana because, I know all the arguments about, well, marijuana is no worse than whiskey, or etc. etc. etc. But the point is, once you cross that line, from the straight society to the drug society -- marijuana, then speed, then it's LSD, then it's heroin, etc. then you're done. But the main point is -- well, well we conduct, well this commission will come up with a number of recommendations perhaps with regard to, [unintelligible] the penalties more, because [unintelligible] too far in this respect. As far as legalizing them is concerned, I think we've got to take a strong stand, one way or the other, and, uh."

RD: "Against, uh."

RN: "Against legalizing. That's the position that I take. Because I think if we legalized it, take the, then, then, your high school and elementary kid, well why not? It [unintelligible]."

May 26, 1971, Time: 10:03 am - 11:35 am -- Oval Office
Conversation: 505-4 -- Meeting with Nixon and HR 'Bob' Haldeman

RN: "Now, this is one thing I want. I want a Goddamn strong statement on marijuana. Can I get that out of this sonofabitching, uh, Domestic Council?"

HRH: "Sure."

RN: "I mean one on marijuana that just tears the ass out of them. I see another thing in the news summary this morning about it. You know it's a funny thing, every one of the bastards that are out for legalizing marijuana is Jewish. What the Christ is the matter with the Jews, Bob, what is the matter with them? I suppose it's because most of them are psychiatrists, you know, there's so many, all the greatest psychiatrists are Jewish. By God we are going to hit the marijuana thing, and I want to hit it right square in the puss, I want to find a way of putting more on that. More [unintelligible] work with somebody else with this."

HRH: "Mm hmm, yep."

RN: "I want to hit it, against legalizing and all that sort of thing."

June 2, 1971, Time: 3:16 pm - 4:15 pm -- Oval Office Conv. 510-3 -- Nixon met with John Ehrlichman

RN: "Why in the name of God do these people take this stuff?"

JE: "For the same reason they drink. It's a, they're bored, it's a, it's a diversion."

RN: "Drinking is a different thing in a sense. Uh, Linkletter's point I think is well taken, he says, 'A person may drink to have a good time' -"

JE: "Mm-hmm"

RN: "-- but a person does not drink simply for the purpose of getting high. You take drugs for the purpose of getting high."

JE: "Yep, yep."

RN: "There is a difference."

September 9, 1971, Unknown between 2:57 pm and 3:03 pm -- Oval Office Conversation No. 568-3 -- The President met with Egil G. ("Bud") Krogh, Jr.

RN: "What we want to do, uh, don't want to, keep him too long, sort of boring you know."

EK: "I know it is, it's uh, all we're trying to do now is to give him some ability backing the commission to keep some of the extremists like Hughes and the rest from going off, and giving a dissenting report or something that we have to repudiate outright. The Attorney General's feeling is that we're, we listen to him. The fact of the meeting is all we need right now, plus a picture. He's asked for a picture. And he just told me he said 'I know what the game is,' he said, 'we're just, I'm gonna get a picture, I'll go back to the Commission, I'll tell them, uh, that we met, the President listened, was appreciative, was [unintelligible]."

RN: "Doesn't want a press picture does he?"

EK: "No sir, just Ollie. [unintelligible], no press picture."

September 9, 1971, 3:03 pm - 3:34 pm -- Oval Office Conversation No. 568-4 -- The President met with Raymond P. Shafer, Jerome H. Jaffe, and Egil G. ("Bud") Krogh, Jr.; the White House photographer was present at the beginning of the meeting.

RN: "When will the marijuana one come out?"

RPS: "The marijuana will come out in March '72. In other words we are coming into the final phases of it now, we've had all of our public hearings. We have not, we have nine more informal hearings."

RN: "You've had all your public hearings already?"

RPS: "All of the public hearings, yes, and, uh, we've had, had, have had several informal hearings, we have nine more of those including one at, at federal college (?), Monday."

RN: "Here."

RPS: "Right here in Washington, [unintelligible]."

RN: "Hard to find anybody who isn't on the stuff?"

RPS: "Uh, no. [unintelligible] Over 75 percent of the [unintelligible] are white, and, uh, and under 18, almost 85 percent, which I [unintelligible]."

RN: "It's now becoming a white problem."

RPS: "It's almost, it's a real tragedy. Well look, the thing, the thing is, we're, we've been a very low profile commission as you know from the very beginning. We didn't go through the whole folderol and, uh--"

RN: "How long have you been operating, uh, I don't know."

RPS: "Well, you appointed us, the last day of January. We organized on February the Fifth, but we didn't get any money until the end of March."

RN: "So you didn't start till then."

RPS: "No, we, uh, were in operation April, April, because, uh--"

RN: "And so your hearings began."

RPS: "Right. You very carefully, uh, gave us some money in advance before Congress acted to give us any money, you gave us some money out of your contingency fund. And uh, when we got our, uh, uh, money, then, uh, we were able to move in high gear. I want to thank you very much for the fact that all the money that we've requested has been approved. I've been working closely with George Schultz and, uh, and Congress has approved what we asked for which is, uh, really uh, extraordinary. But we've uh, we've got a tiny morale problem as uh, you may or may not know, and that's one of the reasons why I wanted to see you, get what we're doing into proper perspective so that, uh we won't have to go through this again. We had a [unintelligible] that, you know, that Congress would, some of your enemies in Congress would like to use this as a, a [unintelligible] and we're not going to let that happen if we can possibly avoid it."

EK: "How would they use that as, as a [unintelligible]."

RPS: "Well, when the Commission was first formed you know, there's criticism in part of the press about the fact that we're old and conservative and that we were put together by a President to merely tow the party line and the attitudes of uh, [unintelligible]. Then secondly, Mike Sonnenreich, who's our

executive director and doing a very excellent job came from BNDD, in the Department of Justice and those people from the scientific community thought that, uh, they should, uh--"

RN: "Would you like some tea, or Coca-Cola, or--"

RPS: "I'd love some tea."

RN: "Or coffee."

RPS: "Or coffee. Coffee if you have some."

RN: "Coffee's [unintelligible] here. Yeah. Fine."

RPS: "And uh, uh, we had a little trouble getting Mike uh, uh, elected by the Commission the --"

[unintelligible, RN and RPS talk over each other]

RN: "Do you know him?"

JHJ: "Yes."

RN: "Do you like him?"

JHJ: "Competetent man."

RN: "Yeah."

RPS: "In any event that was just one of the --"

RN: "The thing about, let me say that the thing I'm, I really feel concerned about is this, that uh, Ray, is, that I know you were a former prosecutor, uh. The difficulty with the whole commissions, you set them up, is that, uh, you're going to [suffer ?] them, you know, we've had so many discredited committees, [unintelligible] screwing off in every different direction, so forth. I'm sure you understand. This is an area of course where we, we don't, I mean there's an awful lot of stuff Dr. Jaffe's the first to, admit and he's a real expert in his field, that we don't know all the answers. However, I have a strong firm convictions which I have expressed and which I won't change, about the, about the, the, the situation [unintelligible] about marijuana, in, in two areas. One, about its legalne-, about legalizing which some would do. Second however, now on the other hand, my, my attitude toward penalties on marijuana, is uh, very powerful. I talked with District

Attorney on [unintelligible] and all the rest, and to take somebody that's smoked some of this stuff, put him into a jail with a bunch of hardened criminals, is [silly?], that's absurd."

RPS: "Absolutely yes."

RN: "There must be different ways than jail. I think that's your experience, is it not? Have you talked to, uh, what's his name up there, uh--"

Unknown: "Arlen Spector"

JHJ: "Uh, no I, no I haven't."

RN: "Spector's got a remarkable crime program, where, where where basically they don't even get records."

JHJ: "Uh, we've been working on it, we've been working on it."

RN: "Almost like probation, give them probation before uh, before indictment."

JHJ: "Uh, Illinois has just passed a similar bill."

RN: "They do the same thing?"

JHJ: "In effect we sentence people to a school, for six months. They have to come every Saturday, they're, been doing this. It was initiated by the uh, by the uh district attorney and that ultimately if they haven't been rearrested and if they carried out the sentence appropriately, they don't, they're not criminalized, and yet it's not legalized."

RN: "What you have here is a very interesting live situation, where there is a certain [unintelligible] through the country, that, heh, on the one hand want to make smoking illegal, cigarette smoking illegal and marijuana legal. Now, that's what I mean, that doesn't make any damned sense now. I mean, probably if we repeat what that didn't help its best aspects everything shouldn't do anything shouldn't need it, but uh, you know if they're going to [unintelligible]. On the marijuana thing, I have very strong feelings that that's, uh the, best final, uh, analysis, that once you start down that road, uh, the chances of going further down that road are greater. I'm aware some disagree with that, but uh, the uh, and also we have some people

that are, frankly promoting it. They're not good people. The whole marijuana, uh--"

RPS: "I understand that, let let me answer, not answer, at least discuss with you the points that you've raised because this is crucial to what we're attempting to do."

RN: "Mm-hmm."

RPS: "National commissions have not been in very excellent repute, but we--"

RN: [unintelligible]

RPS: "And, uh, when you asked me to take this job I hesitated in fact, did not, uh, see I could see clouds of what happened with the Scranton, uh, Scranton Commission. I thought that was a disgrace. I told John Mitchell that and I think he passed it on to you. I thought that the things that arose before --"

[unintelligible, RPS, RN, possibly one or two others spoke at once]

RPS: "Well, sure, but I'm just saying--"

RN: "Just went off, [unintelligible]"

RPS: "And, uh, and third, I said that if I would take it of course I had to have your support but that we were going to play it low pro, profile, we were not going to have a great lot of hoopla and we would do nothing that would in any way embarrass you or the Administration because in the long run that's going to hurt the country, if we have a Commission that just comes through with a report that, that, that creates controversy and gives fodder for the newspapers to, to, to create a lot of conflict, that, they're not [unintelligible]. So we've been very careful on that. And secondly, I think that I am able to say without qualification that you have a commission here that you yourself have appointed, that they are very intelligent, they are well-known in their own fields and in their own communities and they're not going to do anything such as happened in previous Commission reports."

RN: "Good."

RPS: "And insofar as legalization, I think the thing that has

caused us the greatest problem was your statement in San Clemente -- which is a part of your strong convictions, naturally you expressed them as you felt them. But you used the word legalization, and, the way I answered it was, Look, we're a national commission, we're going to take a look at the whole picture, we know that the president is interested in what we're doing, is concerned about the problem, and, uh, we've never had a chance to discuss what he means by legalization. If he means, uh, removing all controls, or if [unintelligible] simple possession, these are things that can be worked out at a later date. We're going ahead and make our studies, and I know that he is wholeheartedly behind us because of everything that he has done. That does not mean that he's going to agree with everything which we say, but, that he knows that these are men of, uh, integrity, men and women of integrity who wanted to do something for their country."

RN: "Mm-hmm, mm-hmm."

RPS: "Now, what, what happened on this when this statement was made, several members of the commission called up and said, well we may as well, give up. I said No, that isn't right, the President has his own, uh, convictions on this and he isn't going to tell the Commission what to say or what not to say."

RN: "Come out with a different view."

RPS: "Well certainly, you know we [unintelligible, both RPS and RN talk at once]

RPS: "Well, yes, but sure, the point is, that, I mean, say what they say, what the Commission is doing is, is, is following [unintelligible], and in fact, the, the confidential report that I had prepared to give you to Bud so that you, you've maybe even seen it--"

RN: "Yeah."

RPS: "--gives clearly the direction that we're going, and I think that that should relieve your mind, uh, uh, insofar as your personal convictions or so. We don't want you to say, Well I've got a great commission, anything they say we'll follow; well of course not, that's ridiculous."

RN: "No, no. [unintelligible], to look at it."

RPS: "Now on the hand we are a national commission, certain, with the, really the first commission going in to this particular problem of long-range action on the whole field of drug abuse that the United States has ever had. We're, we're we're conducting a national survey that's never been done before."

RN: "Mm, hmm"

RPS: "With clear, you know, [unintelligible] going to get tough. But at the present time, we have about a million nine, we're going to need, uh, seven, we don't know how much but we have uh, but the point was that we were initially authorized one million but Congress was so interested in it that they upped the authorization to four, but we're going to get five, and the total amount is what about 3.7?"

Unknown, probably EK: "About that."

RPS: "I think that for the, for the little over two --"

RN: "Will you take polls and do a lot of --"

RPS: "We're going to have a survey put out by one of the fine outfits out of Princeton, uh, not Gallup, but Research Associates, they're a very good, uh, outfit. And they're willing to do this uh, uh problem of marijuana attitudes, then we're going into the whole field of what is the extent of marijuana. We have all kinds of figures, anywhere from 8 million up to 40 million."

Unknown: "[unintelligible]"

RPS: "That's right. In our, in our total [unintelligible]."

RN: "Like what we had in Vietnam."

RPS: "What we're trying to do, we don't [unintelligible], we don't believe, that, that uh, that there should be, uh, given to the people the combination of the use of a dangerous substance--"

RN: "With respectability [unintelligible, both RN and RPS speaking at same time]."

RPS: "We don't want to give it respectability, and we will not be--"

RN: "Like uh, almost, almost anything in the drug field, it's making it respectable, just make sure you don't. That's fine, if they, I, there's some person, he can try anything, maybe even heroin, and get away with it."

RPS: "Well sure."

RN: "It won't work with kids."

RPS: "One of our, one of our doctors on our, uh, on our Commission is uh, is one of the finest pharmacologists in the nation, Dr. Seevers of Michigan. Jerry knows him very well, he has his own [unintelligible], he talks about heroin, he says you can smoke a little, er, take a little heroin and, uh, and get away with it. It's the idea that it becomes a [unintelligible]. What we want to do is to be sure that we don't give approval, the approval of society. We're interested in --"

RN: "Right."

RPS: "--public health."

RN: "Very important, very important."

RPS: "I can't say that publicly --"

RN: "Not just, not just physical health."

RPS: "And, and we're not, we're not just interested in the, uh, pure pharmacological effects of these drugs. We're looking at the whole social picture."

RN: "Good."

RPS: "We want to de-mythologize marijuana so that the kids aren't going out experimenting with it because they think it's great stuff. And uh, [unintelligible RPS and others talking at once]. I think, I think that we've gone into this thing as, uh, deeply as, as uh, any commission could. [unintelligible], I'm, I'm having a great time learning, and, uh, we, we have individuals, but what we need from you is your, uh, public support, as a commission, not from the standpoint that you're going to accept what we say but that here is a commission that is working on a problem that cuts across the cross-section of every, uh, family in, in the nation, next, next to your economy,

and incidentally I think that what you've done in that regard is excellent."

RN: "No, we're --"

RPS: "But what we--"

RN: "Yeah, yeah, this, this, you're right, it's terribly important."

RPS: "Next to the economy, and also the winding down of the war which I don't think will be a particular issue next year and I think you agree with me there. I think the problems of drug abuse will be a political issue. And, while our report isn't going to give you a platform, it's going to be the thing that will, uh, bring us the kind of victory you want, but it can be a source of possible embarrassment and that's why I don't want to have, give any ammunition to the, those who would like to use it against you."

EK: "So far you're staying away from any possible endorsement of legalization of marijuana."

RPS: "Absolutely, absolutely."

RN: "I would keep in mind that, you [unintelligible], you would run too strongly against the public tide, but suppose it ought to be done."

RPS: "Well, I understand that."

RN: "You're just, you have a, a great problem."

RPS: "We have, we have, uh, four Congressmen on the Commission, uh, two Republicans, two Democrats, and, at least one of the, the opposition would like to, uh, to uh, take over. We've prevented that. Uh, and uh, I think that we've got the Commission moving in the right direction. We, we're, we're, we're seeking unanimity, I think we're going to have that, and we're staying away from that, that, that quote legalization endquote syndrome that could create, uh, very--"

RN: "You see, the thing that is so terribly important here is that it not appear that the Commission's frankly just a bunch of do-gooders, I mean, they say well they're a bunch of old men who don't understand, that's fine, I wouldn't mind that, but, but if they get the idea you're just a bunch of do-gooders that are

going to come out with a quote soft on marijuana report, that'll destroy it, right off the bat. I think there's a need to come out with a report that is totally, uh, uh, oblivious to some obvious, uh, differences between marijuana and other drugs, other dangerous drugs, there are differences. And also that you don't go into the matter of, uh, penalties and that sort of thing, as to whether there should be uniformity in penalties, whether in courts, I'd much rather have uniformity than diversity, but uh, different approaches. I'd say look, everywhere, hell, in Texas they put them in jail for six years."

RPS: "Well, longer than that, you can get 99 years up in North Dakota."

[unintelligible, both RPS and RN talk at same time]

RN: "--it's very tough, most [unintelligible] off the wall."

RPS: "Well the Act, the Act of 1970, the, the drug abuse act of, er narcotics control act of 1970 is the best thing that has hit the country, best, this is the best thing that has hit the country in the narcotics field. And it is, and, the Commission is wholeheartedly behind that, I, I give you that assurance. We're going to, we're going to [unintelligible] the shots at marijuana, scientific shots, and after all, three of the members of our commission, our advisors, uh, to Jerry -- Dr. Seevers, Dr. Farnsworth, and uh Dr. Brill, they're three of the foremost medical men in the country. And so you can rest assured that we're not going to go off half-cocked, we're not a bunch of stupid, you know?"

RN: "Well, I know about you, you know, but I know your problem of course, Ray, --"

RPS: "But I'm, I'm, I'm --"

RN: "Keep your Commission in line."

RPS: "I'm going to keep the Commission in line and one of the things that I can do it is to raise their morale--"

RN: "Mm-hmm."

RPS: "--is to, to have them assured. In fact, they asked me to come see you because they're concerned."

RN: "Well let me ask you, how close is your contact with Krogh

and Jaffe?"

RPS: "Well we have a, we have a very excellent --"

[unintelligible as RPS and RN try to talk at the same time]

RN: "--but you work with the staff."

RPS: "I have not had a chance to meet with Jerry as much as I would like to be and I think that we will be doing more things together--"

RN: "I think that would be a good idea, you see, we've given him a very broad, uh, uh, assignment here and uh, and uh I think, I think, he's uh, how how do you feel, would you like to say a word about the Commission, what uh, what our attitude should be?"

JHJ: "Well, soon as I can stop behaving like a one-armed paperhanger we're going to have more and more contact, uh --"

RN: "Would you say it's a bunch of do-gooders?"

JHJ: "In this interim, gearing up, I, I probably share the, part of the responsibility for not linking up with Mike and others--"

RN: "Let's try to do that, shall we? After all, it is a commission that's spending three and a half million dollars, it will have enormous impact when it hap- happens. And of course, the problem in this field is, uh, the acceptability among those, I mean it's a question, it doesn't make a damn bit of difference what we say about drugs, if people want them, they think it's all proper, they're going to use them, they're going to find ways to get it. And, uh, I think the most, the most important, uh, function of the Commission really is education, using, using the [unintelligible] lead the country a little about this thing, whether this is just a, uh, is, is, as you say mythology, misdirect, etc., on both sides. Some of it, some of it is that maybe marijuana is, uh, is, [unintelligible] saying those are the worst things that can happen, and others [unintelligible]."

RPS: "Well, Mr. President. Well, I hate to make broad statements, but I think that this is going to be one of the most far-reaching reports that, uh, has come out of a national commission--"

RN: "How many members do you have in this Commission?"

RPS: "We have nine provided by you and four Congressmen, that's thirteen."

RN: "Nine appointed, er, public members, how many are doctors?"

RPS: "There are four doctors. Four doctors."

RN: "Four doctors, the other men we know as [hippies ?], [unintelligible]. Well I think what we really need here, let me suggest this, first you go back to your Commission and tell them we had a talk and that, we uh, we I believe the work of the Commission is enormously important, naturally I can't endorse in advance the Administration cannot, what its finding are, not knowing what you're going to find. But I urge the Commission to dig and delve deeply and particularly I, I, I think that in this field more than anything else, we need lots of men on the job, and, in this field we need, above everything else, men on the job for the purpose of educating the public. I think your, uh, maybe your low profile men is fine up to this point but when your report comes out, it's going to be very high profile, it should be, and I think it would be probably helpful, probably helpful if we could have some good consultation at that time."

RPS: "Oh there will be."

RN: "In other words, because if we don't have, what I think they have, Ray, is same that happened once. Well now Scranton, with it, did well, himself, but his staff ran away with the thing, you know, and it was a turbulent time. But you see, and and he's [unintelligible], but you're enough of a pro to know that for you to come out with something that would run counter to what the Congress feels and what the country feels and what we're planning to do, would make your Commission just look bad as hell. And I think in, I think that, and on the other hand, you could probably render a great service, that doesn't mean we're going to tell you what it's going to be, but we're going into this too, see, and naturally the whole, we're looking into it from the White House, from the Jaffe group and we're going to be into it, the, naturally from the Justice Department and the HEW, you know, and all the rest."

RPS: "One thing we're stepping --"

RN: "Most of them are stepping on each other --"

RPS: "--and we should know that. There are thirteen different

agencies and that's --"

RN: "That has been, I've said that and I told Jaffe when he came in here that, we're [unintelligible], and I don't think he's been able to do much yet, but, and the Defense Department's, everybody's in it, and nobody's doing it well. That's part of the problem. So we'll be very interested in your recommendations in that respect. But let me just say one. Don't go to HEW."

RPS: "Oh for heaven's sakes no --"

RN: "Don't go to HEW. Well we might, we might have big problems with HEW too. The difficulty that, that, well, Bureau, as an old prosecutor, and, uh, as an old prosecutor, I, I, I don't mind somebody putting in J. Edgar Hoover's hands, but, the, I, I come down very hardly on the side of putting in, uh, hard-headed doctors, rather than a bunch of muddle-headed psychiatrists."

RPS: "Well you've, you've hit on --"

RN: "They're all muddle-headed. You know what I mean?"

RPS: "Of course I --"

RN: "I know those people over there, doc--"

JHJ: "Too many of them are."

RN: "Huh?"

JHJ: "Too many of them are."

RN: "Too many of them are, I mean, their, they get so that their hearts run their brains, and it should be the other way around, most of the time."

RPS: "Our operation, our operations are going to complement each other very well because we're working on the long-range blueprint for the things that are the people of the United States on a total policy -- health policy, social policy, and, and as well as, uh --"

RN: "I think [unintelligible], I think they have enormous respect, and I think we ought to try to play [unintelligible, participants speak at same time], and I think, and I urge, I urge strongly that the Jaffe office have the very closest contact with the Commission, maintaining of course your

independence and theirs. They have to because Ray [unintelligible], but on the other hand, you could [unintelligible], and they're all trying to find the answer and maybe there aren't a hell of a lot [unintelligible]. You agree?"

JHJ: "Yes. I think there are different emphases. They're long-term but focusing right now on marijuana. We're responding with action to the crisis of heroin and other drugs--"

RPS: "We, uh, we're on the, we're on the hard drugs end. Well we just came back from Belgium. We're not in marijuana so much. We came back from Amsterdam, er Holland, and Belgium, and England. And one of the things that we were looking into in England primarily was the kind of methadone treatment that, that Jerry is interested in, because we want, we think that this is an excellent approach and we're out in the field getting first-hand knowledge --"

EK (?): "That reinforces what we're doing terrifically too."

RPS: "No, I'd, uh, there's no reason in the world why this couldn't be, uh, worked out. Uh, in substance, just exactly what you want to, have happen, and it has to work in a [unintelligible] too, for the benefit of the general public, and this is what --"

RN: "Read an amusing story, [unintelligible] was telling me, --"

RPS: "I have an amusing story too--"

RN: "uh, it is uh, this is a father and son, got, got arrested [unintelligible], his father says, you [unintelligible]. [unintelligible] a couple more weeks you know he says, our, says you know I'm working my garden and everything, father says ok, father says well, uh maybe the kid couldn't [unintelligible] that day, go out and work in the garden. He found out that the little son of a bitch was growing marijuana, had to wait for the crop to come in. It's an absolute true story. But, I, I, I believe having said all I have, I have a tremendous [unintelligible], I see these kids, and we've all, we've all, uh, grown up, and, there was smoking, there was alcohol, there's a lot of other things people do, er, in the old days, etc. etc. I mean, there's a, the uh, maybe, uh, uh, going to see Greta Garbo in the day, etc. etc. Don't call me yellow, is that --"

Unknown: "I Was, I Am Curious Yellow."

RN: "But anyway. It's a [unintelligible] what we did, but, by golly, the thing to do now is to alert the country to the problem and say now, this far no farther, and I think that that's you want to do, is take a strong line."

RPS: "I think this can be done, and I think that uh, the report that comes out will be, uh, something that we can, uh, wholeheartedly embrace. You may not --"

RN: "[unintelligible]"

RPS: "What? Oh [unintelligible, meeting starts to break up, noise of people moving and talking. The president gives Shafer some golf balls and cufflinks.]

RN: "Ah, very good."

RPS: "Thanks."

RN: "How's the golf?"

RPS: "It's uh --"

RN: "You slipping in?"

RPS: "Yes, [unintelligible]"

RN: "Some golf balls. Here's another, cufflinks, all right?"

RPS: "I also [unintelligible], thanks very much, and uh, I know that you're aware of the other, other problems--"

RN: "Yeah."

RPS: "Marianne Means wrote a rather nasty column, I guess you saw it, indicating that you were treating me like a dog because I had been recommend, recommended for a judgeship that I was afraid to [laughter] go on the Commission."

RN: "That's right. Well Marianne Means has to do that shit, she's says, she does those things in order to get paid attention to."

RPS: "Well sure. She lost her, little boy though, you know."

RN: "Well what?"

RPS: "Well she was very close to a previous administration, you probably remember."

RN: [unintelligible]

RPS: [laughter]

RN: "No I haven't tried that myself, I leave, I leave that for fellows like yourself. I mean uh, you work her over."

RPS: "Well don't worry, I will."

RN: "No, invite her in, but there's no worse. Ok, Ray, see when we see you."

RPS: "Thanks again."

RN: "You [unintelligible] I have every confidence in, you worked on Howard Fuller, you've--"

RPS: [unintelligible]

RN: "Well, you know I put it, uh, we're doing our part."

RPS: "[unintelligible]"

RN: "Is, is Scott screwing it up?"

RPS: "I think so, but I can't [unintelligible]"

RN: "That's what I understand. Mitchell knows that, that it's Scott, but uh, [unintelligible], you know you --"

RPS: "I can't, I can't prove that, I can't, I uh told Mitchell [unintelligible] was a good man, because he worked in my campaign and your campaign, some son of a bitch is [unintelligible] close to Schapp."

RN: "Who?"

RPS: "They decided they made the mistake, that they're going to get me, and Scott played with [unintelligible]."

RN: "You look, [unintelligible], just keep working on him because he'll be, he'll be contained --"

RPS: "Just one other question--"

RN: "-- change from one thing to another."

RPS: "I know. There is one other point to make."

RN: "Mm-hmm, mm-hmm."

RPS: "Uh, [unintelligible]"

RN: "Appeals? Yeah, I heard, yeah."

RPS: [unintelligible]

RN: "Our first appointment is going to be a black. Because point one, that we're going to have another one after that. We've got to have one because Ray--"

RPS: "How many other --"

RN: "Half the, half the [unintelligible], so there are going to be two."

RPS: "There will be. One and then the other."

RN: "So talk to Mitchell about that."

RPS: "Keep that, uh--"

RN: "The first one, they're going to do how, Ohio, and he will be--"

RPS: "I just want to be with you if there's anything I can do to help you next year--"

RN: "One of the military fields might be good, but I, I don't know, but uh--"

RPS: "But this other thing may come through--"

RN: "District court might be better --"

RPS: "That's circuit."

RN: "Circuit, circuit."

RPS: "Well, you're going to keep plugging it for me, you don't want me to --"

RN: "Oh yeah, yeah."

RPS: "you don't want me to get out of that."

RN: "No, hell no, we have [unintelligible]. As a matter of fact, I get, uh, you know that it's [unintelligible]."

[unintelligible]

RPS: "I think the country is so much better now."

RN: "Oh yes."

RPS: "I'm worried about the youth, I'm worried about the kids."

RN: "Oh sure, well--"

RPS: "And I'd like to, to see something done about starting little, uh, groups on campuses that could, could spread out to help you."

RN: "I think they're working on that--."

RPS: "Well that, that ought to be done, ought to be started now."

RN: "Finch, Rumsfeld."

RPS: "Well, they're, they're two of the best to do it."

RN: "[unintelligible]"

RPS: "Again thanks very much."

RN: [unintelligible]

RPS: "-- I say to the press, can I, can I say that you're wholeheartedly, that you stand behind us, and that --"

RN: "They'll ask you about the [unintelligible], I say that my convictions--"

RPS: "That your personal convictions, but that you are aware that we're going to take a, an independent view of the whole thing--"

RN: "Right."

RPS: "--we don't --"

RN: "That I [unintelligible] all the information we can get. But my, make it clear that my personal conviction is solid. I, uh, now don't --"

RPS: "I'm not going to, I'm not going to say, look, he has his personal conviction and he's entitled to that."

RN: [unintelligible]. Ok. All right."

RPS: "Thanks a lot."

May 18, 1971, 12:16 pm - 12:35 pm -- Oval Office Conversation
No. 500-17 -- The President met with Arthur G. (Art) Linkletter and DeVan L. Shumway; Oliver F. ("Ollie") Atkins was present at the beginning of the meeting.

AL: "And then of course, uh, um, I bear down mostly on marijuana because that's the puberty rite today, and I really give them a lecture on marijuana. And you see, the big problem with marijuana--"

RN: "I was asked about marijuana --"

AL: "You should know this --"

RN: "-- two weeks ago in, uh, California, the, what do you say about this, I said well, we're going to have a commission report, I said, [unintelligible] can be very clear, whatever it says, I'm against legalizing."

AL: "Absolutely."

RN: "I said, now, as far as penalties are concerned, that's something else, they should of course be uniform but we, I'm against legalizing, period. I think you've got to draw the line on the damn thing because--"

AL: "That's right. That's right."

RN: "-- they say, well, it's the same with booze. Well, maybe booze is bad, but the point is that, uh, you can, uh, uh, maybe booze can lead to marijuana, can lead to, speed, or uh, or LSD, can lead to heroin, so forth. But, basically, I mean, uh, I know, uh, another way to look at it is this, if I may say so, with regard to, if you get to a, a little more sophisticated

<http://www.csdp.org/research/nixonpot.txt>