

New Nixon Tapes Are Released

*Depth of President's
Anti-Semitism Detailed*

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Beset by the leak of a top-secret history of the Vietnam war and rising unemployment statistics that were hurting his standing in the polls in summer of 1971, President Richard M. Nixon lashed out repeatedly at "the Jews" he saw at the root of his problems.

"The Jews are all over the government," Nixon complained to his chief of staff, H.R. "Bob" Haldeman, in a meeting in the Oval Office that was recorded on one of a set of White House tapes released yesterday at the National Archives. Nixon said the Jews needed to be brought under control by putting someone "in charge who is not Jewish" in key agencies.

"Washington 'is full of Jews,' the president asserted. 'Most Jews are disloyal.' He made exceptions for some of his top aides, such as national security adviser Henry Kissinger, his White House counsel, Leonard Garment, and one of his speechwriters, William Safire, and then added:

"But, Bob, generally speaking, you can't trust the bastards. They turn on you. Am I wrong or right?"

Haldeman agreed wholeheartedly. "Their whole orientation is against you. In this administration, anyway. And they are smart. They have the ability to do what they want to do—which is to hurt us."

Elsewhere on the tapes, Nixon denies being anti-Semitic, but his attitude toward Jews was starkly displayed in the approximately 445 hours of White House tape recordings made between February and July 1971 and released yesterday—the first comprehensive disclosure of confidential discussions between Nixon and his closest advisers. Only portions of recordings dealing with the Watergate scandal and other abuses of governmental power, along with semi-public meetings in the Cabinet room, had been released before.

The newly released tapes give an unprecedented insight into the workings of the Nixon White House, punctuated by the president's frequent coarse comments on prominent figures, including Supreme Court justices, leading newspaper publishers and



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President Nixon exempted top aides Henry Kissinger and Leonard Garment and speechwriter William Safire from his declaration that "most Jews are disloyal."

officials in his own administration.

They show Nixon talking about selling ambassadorships, railing against Jews and other minorities, complaining about the drinking habits of leading members of Congress, and exchanging conspiracy theories with Kissinger and other top aides.

In many cases, Nixon's tirades were touched off by news leaks and political setbacks, such as the occasion at the beginning of July 1971 when the Bureau of Labor Statistics released figures showing that unemployment was on the upswing. Concerned that news of the joblessness was hurting him in the polls, Nixon demanded the ouster of the director of the bureau, Julius Shiskin, and asked his hatchet man, Charles Colson, to investigate the ethnic background of officials in the agency.

"They are all Jews?" Nixon exclaimed when Colson listed the names.

"Every one of them," Colson replied. "Well, with a couple of exceptions. . . . You just have to go down the goddamn list and you know they are out to kill us."

In a later conversation the same day—July 3—Nixon and Haldeman discussed Jewish penetration of the National Security Council staff. "Is Tony Lake Jewish?" Nixon demands, referring to a young Kissinger aide who went on to become national security adviser under President Clinton.

"I've always wondered about that," Haldeman replies.

"He looked it," says Nixon, without reaching a firm conclusion. [Lake is not Jewish].

When The Washington Post gave front-page coverage in April 1971 to a survey showing 60 percent support for antiwar demonstrations among residents of affluent District neighborhoods, Nixon complained that the results were loaded.

"Bob," he explained to a receptive Haldeman, "there's a hell of a lot of Jews in the District, see. . . . The gentiles have moved out."

Such complaints were overshadowed by the controversy surrounding publication of the Pentagon Papers, a classified history of the Vietnam War, that first appeared in the New York Times and later in The Post and other newspapers. Two days after the articles first appeared, the Justice Department

moved to enjoin publication and the battle soon moved to the Supreme Court, which ruled against the government June 30 in a 6-3 decision.

The decision dismayed Nixon, even though he told Colson he had expected such an outcome. That afternoon, he expressed special chagrin at Justice Potter Stewart, whom he described as "a weak bastard" who had been "overwhelmed by the Washington-Georgetown social set." The next morning, in a telephone conversation with FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover, he said he hoped he would "outlive the bastards" on the high court.

"We have got to change that court," he told Hoover, adding that the "stinking decision" had stolen the headlines from his own visit to FBI headquarters, where he had given a tough law-and-order talk.

The two men exchanged views on "a conspiracy" among leading Washington journalists and the man who leaked the classified history, Daniel Ellsberg, to embarrass the government. Hoover observed that he had seen Post Publisher Katharine Graham on television the night before commenting on the decision, and described her as "an old bitch."

"She is a terrible old bag," agreed Nixon. The tapes shed more light on the sometimes tortured relationship between Nixon and Kissinger. At one point, in March 1971, the national security adviser threatened to resign because of critical articles in the news media that he blamed on a jealous secretary of state, William P. Rogers. "I produce an almost pathological reaction in him now," Kissinger told Nixon. "I am such an offense to his ego."

Nixon consoled Kissinger, but later commented to other aides that Kissinger was attempting to gain total control of "everything that comes to me" on foreign policy. "What he does not realize is, I don't read his goddamn papers. . . . I just skim it."

Nixon praised Kissinger as "the man that has the greatest influence on me," but said he did not want to rely on him entirely. "Sometimes he is as wrong as hell. Sometimes Rogers has a good idea, not very often."

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