

**Conversation No. 517-022**

**Date: June 11, 1971**

**Time 2:40 – 2:57 p.m.**

**Location Oval Office**

**Participants: Nixon, Haldeman, and Kissinger**

*Following his conversations with Kissinger and Connally, Nixon was no mood to hear about the State Department's objections. Upon being informed that Secretary of State Rogers opposed Connally's suggestion, Nixon snapped: "We sure as hell can do something about expropriation. Don't you agree, Henry? Should we just simply lie back and let them expropriate things around the world? Screw 'em." Kissinger concurred, noting that "unless we become too dangerous to tackle, there's gonna be a constant erosion of our international position." Nixon then harkened back to the days of John Foster Dulles' tenure at Foggy Bottom (i.e. the period of the coup d'états against Mossadeq and Arbenz), when "people were just too afraid to tackle us." [...]*

[517-022\\_Clip1](#) (1.2m, 1:12)

**Haldeman:** Rogers called me this morning, all concerned about the conversation last night on expropriation. He said, "You can't do anything about that. It's—Our national policy is in favor of expropriation." And he's very concerned about Connally's view on Europe, and we can't have— Any thought of not supporting the European Community would be a direct opposition to the President's position.

**Nixon:** Well, we're not going to do anything openly on it, but we can—

**Haldeman:** Yeah.

**Nixon:** —adjust some things behind the scenes. But on expropriation, Bill was reflecting the whole State Department attitude. We sure as hell can do something about expropriation. Don't you agree, Henry? Should we just simply lie back and let them expropriate things around the world? Screw 'em—

**Kissinger:** I think, unless we become too dangerous to tackle, there's going to be a constant erosion of our international position.

**Nixon:** Right.

**Kissinger:** We can say what we want about [John Foster] Dulles, but in his period, people were just too afraid to tackle us.

**Nixon:** They didn't monkey around with the United States.

**Kissinger:** And, one of the advantages the Soviets have is: anyone who wants to play domestic politics with kicking around a superpower thinks three times before he tackles the Soviets—

**Nixon:** That's right.

**Kissinger:** —'cause they hit back, and we don't.

**Nixon:** That's right.

[...]