

“I Want the Goddamn Funds”

Date: May 18, 1972

Participant: Richard M. Nixon

Participant: H. R. “Bob” Haldeman

Start Time: 12:33

Place: Camp David

President Nixon wanted to retaliate against antiwar protests by cutting off federal grants to elite universities. One of his targets was the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), then the biggest beneficiary of federal contracts. As Michael Koncewicz wrote in *They Said No to Nixon: Republicans Who Stood Up to the President’s Abuse of Power*, officials within Nixon’s own administration blocked his attempts to wield federal funds as a political weapon.

President Nixon: I want those funds cut off, for that MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology]. Did you—

H. R. “Bob” Haldeman: Right.

President Nixon: Now—

Haldeman: I know what you mean.

President Nixon: All right. You get ahold of [Caspar W.] Weinberger and say, “I want the goddamn funds, and I want them to know it now.” Get it done.

Haldeman: Right.

President Nixon: OK.

Haldeman: OK.

End of excerpt.

“Richard M. Nixon and H. R. ‘Bob’ Haldeman on 18 May 1972,” Conversation 131-040, Draft Transcript, Presidential Recordings Program, Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia.