



H. R. Haldeman Diaries Collection, January 18, 1969 – April 30, 1973

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Wednesday, September 8.

President had the day clear to work on the Congressional speech for tomorrow, had me over at 10:00 this morning during a break on speech drafts to go over schedule plans in detail, particularly the Northwest trip—the question of when to go to Montana, Portland, Seattle, and so on. But he wants to try to work all of them in on the way to Alaska, and he's agreed not to try to get into California at that time, but thinks we need to really work on doing some good planning for California, and to get in there. Also, he's anxious to get started on the state committee dinners with the political types.

That got him into a general PR analysis. He wants to be sure I force all our staff to read the new media book when it comes out. Then he got to going back over what we've done this year—China, the economy, the wedding, etcetera--and we should be doing much better than we are in the polls as a result of that. He feels the problem is that-- is that we try to use the economy and the war as an explanation, and that's not the answer. The real problem is media erosion day-by-day. On the plus side is our warm reception in the country, but now we need to get our own orators out. He raises the question, now what do we do about it? How do we get this turned around?

We got into a discussion of Shultz's plan to set up a series of meetings for consultation following the Congressional address--one with labor, one with business, one with agriculture, and one with Congress--allowing an hour and a half for each of the meetings. The President agreed to do them, on the basis that they'd just be listening sessions for him, and he'll include the fact that he's doing them in the Congressional speech as part of his pitch.

He raised the question with me of his concern on Henry's delusions of grandeur as a peacemaker, in that he keeps hitting the President on the idea of his going to Hanoi secretly to try and settle Vietnam. President doesn't want him to do it, first of all, because he doesn't think it'll work; and secondly, because he doesn't think it can be kept a secret. He's concerned that it would be a disaster to do it and fail. The risk is too great, and also there's no use meeting with Pham Van



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Dong anyway, the President doesn't feel. He wants me to have Haig tout Henry off of this. He feels Henry doesn't realize that the Communist method of working is to keep talking and to screw you behind your back while they're doing it. To them, talking is a tactic to win, not to work out an agreement; whereas, Henry keeps trying to work out an agreement with them.

He also said he-- the troop announcement in November, he's not going to do on TV. He'll wait until December 21 and do the final announcement at that time, and do it on television. And he's moved the office press conference from October 7 to the 12th, so he can tie that in with the Russian announcement.

He wants to be sure that Colson and his crew blast Muskie on his busing statement. We should hit him not for avoiding taking a position. He doesn't want to leave them on the "I don't know where he stands" hook. He wants to hit him for holding the wrong position, which is, that he is for busing. Figures Dent should get the busing-- the anti-busing people to take him on on this.

End of September 8.