



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

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Wednesday November 17th. Staff meeting that started out this morning with the A-F of L question. Whether, the President should go down to the convention. Ehrlichman has now shifted to being conditionally in favor, if it is made unmistakably clear that the President has not sold out to labor in the past. In other words, rewrite the history as it's believed, but do it in the presence of labor. Shultz also votes to go. They both feel there should be a maximum buildup on the Daniel into the lions' den thesis. The question then came up with the President, who basically had the feeling he should not go. That it's a question of throwing pearls before swine, and he just doesn't think we should. Also he reviewed Cook's first draft of the speech, or actually the fifth draft, and he has totally the wrong idea, because it's the kind of speech the President really wants to give. Whereas, his plan was to have a written speech that was basically the dull routine standard speech that they would be expecting, and that he would then not deliver that, but he would say that he stands behind it and speak extemporaneously. Also it praised Meany to the skies, which is, of course, ridiculous. He then made the point that we have to weigh this versus some more valuable use of his time. The problem is there really isn't anything he needs to do with his time at this point.

Part of the problem hung on the question of whether the Pay Board would vote retroactivity and whether there was any problem of the A-F of L pulling out of the Pay Board. In any event, he had me tell Cook to redraft the speech in terms of a basic boiler plate-type speech, doing the kind that would be expected. Work in all the standard stuff, and leave out all the good things. He said to take out all the Colson stuff, all the dignity of work, all the praise of Meany, everything on foreign policy and everything on the sup--, their support of international affairs. Make it totally the type of usual bland stuff; what this Administration has done for labor and a little on Phase II. Put in the laundry list, saying I call to the attention of the leaders of organized labor these accomplishments of the Administration, and ask for support on page, on Phase II in a low-key way. No demagoging, no purple rhetoric.



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The thing then went on through the day in some doubt, but he decided he'd make up his mind at 7:00 tonight whether to go or not. And if he decided to go he would leave at 9:00 tonight, go on down to Florida, so he would be ready to speak at noon tomorrow. At 7:00, he said he would go. He told me to go ahead and get it set up. We had that pre-worked out with Shultz, and it was then his task to call Meany and confirm it. It took him an hour and a half to reach Meany. In the meantime we had run out of time, really, as far as coming down, leaving tonight. But at 8:30, Shultz finally did get Meany, and Meany, in effect, said the President can go to hell. That tomorrow was his day at the convention, and he wasn't about to let the President come in and upstage him. And he put it really on the basis that the schedule was all set and he couldn't change it. He did say he could speak at 4:00 tomorrow or at any time he wanted to on Friday. Our recommendation then was that he speak at 10:30 Friday morning, and after some discussion, the President agreed. Colson and Shultz were pretty furious with Meany's attitude and were practically tempted not to go. Felt that we shouldn't let him get away with this kind of approach to the President. But actually, when you get down to it, it was really pretty logical and understandable that he would take that position.

We had some discussion during the day today on the Peterson problem. He told Shultz to take Peterson, or told me, to tell Shultz to take Peterson totally out of the play on international financial policy. This arising from Connally's feeling that we're speaking with too many voices. He said that Shultz, Peterson is to quit talking to people such as Schweitzer, who he had lunch with today. He's to have no more external talk, especially to foreigners. This is to be done under the assumption that Shultz, McCracken, and Peterson are all told to have no more discussion with foreigners, but actually the one he's after is Peterson. He got into this after the whole thing of asking Peterson yesterday to take the Secretary of Commerce. All of us, incidentally, agreed



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that was about the most graceless exercise we had ever seen—really on both the President and Peterson's part. That is the thing yesterday.

He also got into the Illinois political problem and wanted Mitchell to get into this. He's really concerned, the more he thinks about it, the more input he gets, that we have a real problem of Ogilvie dragging us down to the point that we may not survive it. His view is that we should poll the whole situation and see if maybe we shouldn't get someone else to run, possibly Rumsfeld.

Also as a result of his meeting with Reagan this morning, he was somewhat more concerned about conservatives than usual, because Reagan gave him the standard pitch.

Then beyond that, we got to the problem of the Gallup poll, which will come out tomorrow, which shows him dropping five points. I reported this to him this afternoon, and he, of course, brooded over that some trying to analyze it. He feels that the increase in undecided, which accounts for the major part of the shift, is caused by an event, which proves that events change polls. He's decided that we ought to run a phone poll over the weekend and check the effect of the UN deal, which was right before the Gallup poll, plus the troop announcement which was afterwards, plus the A-F of L reaction when he goes down there. We'll do some correlation work and see if our polls showed that the Red China thing was especially effective in the West, because he dropped 11 points in the West and that might be a clue to the reason for the drop.

We got into some discussion on trip plans for the December journeys. We still don't have anything fixed on that.



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Henry got his trip this weekend cancelled because Le Duc Tho let us know that he wasn't going to be in Paris, so Henry said he wouldn't come either. Le says he's sick, but Henry figures it's completely a matter of their not wanting to come to the conference table at this point, primarily because of the President hinting at the fact that we were pursuing other routes.

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End of November 17th.