



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

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Wednesday, March 15.

President at Camp David all day. Ehrlichman and his crew went up this morning, and President had Rose come up later this afternoon. Starting at the staff meeting this morning, we got into the ITT problem, first off with Flanigan, and the question of whether he should testify. Our general feeling is that he should file a statement but should stay with the Executive Privilege as far as going up himself.

The President called late this morning, he said he could see why Colson and the rest get so discouraged about the ITT thing, the way the papers play it. That he had read the papers pretty carefully this morning and saw what a problem we had. Even then though, he didn't notice the caption on *The New York Times* photo, where they said Mitchell was talking with Marion of ITT when actually he was talking to Bob Mardian, the assistant Attorney General. Which is one we're going to push to try and make some hay out of. Wants us to get the roughest people we can to call the networks and if they don't use that thing, but it turned out pretty well, because Mitchell waved *The New York Times* before the TV cameras and got on CBS, that was the only one, but he at least made that. President thinks we ought to consider whether we should have the Vice President take the media on. Also he raises the point that maybe we should play for the big game now, or not now, but sometime pretty soon, with regard to the assault on Flanigan, and that we might consider his resigning and then going up before the committee. He feels we can't let the situation develop where Flanigan is demolished, and that maybe we should get his letter and statement up now, and then decide how long to let this go before we actually hit back on the other point. He feels that Flanigan's got to get the statement out before the President has a press conference.

Flanigan also had a problem with Connally, who had withdrawn his support for legislation he had previously okayed. Left Flanigan sort of floating loose. Pete's concern came out of the same thing as the-- as the problem we got into last night. President made the point that Shultz said to



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consider Connally as our first responsibility, and have to stay on making sure that he doesn't get off the track again like that.

President's main problem this morning is his busing speech, he called and said he was studying the Safire draft, and wasn't sure we could pull off a ten minute speech. Said Safire's draft was too tinny, he didn't take his wording out of the statement, and if we really want to give a speech, then the President's going to have to write it himself. He says maybe it's better just to let a news show handle it than for him to go on with a lot of gobbledygook. He said that the real problem is that we've got to get all the clichés out, and get back to the Price draft, picking out Ray's good material. Basically, he's trying to determine in his own mind whether it can be done. Says it does have some good points. I think he really just wanted to be argued into it, and I told him I did think it should be done, but urged he talk with Ehrlichman, which he said he'd do. He said that the thing here is that this is a profound and difficult problem—busing, and that we can't be superficial about it, but we don't want to come on with something that loses our strong position by the way we make our television statement. He then said we shouldn't schedule any speeches for him until we get a speechwriter. He can't believe there isn't a bright young conservative with balance that could handle what we want here.

Later in the day he said he had a long talk with Ehrlichman. Ehrlichman sees the problem with the Safire draft, too, but the two of them agreed that they should go ahead with the speech, and Ehrlichman summed it up that Safire's thing was too apologetic. He says Ehrlichman's on exactly the same wavelength as he is. That we can't go for the sappy, sentimental business, the problem is that our people are influenced by the liberal press. So he's going to work on it and produce a speech.

End of March 15.