



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

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Friday, March 16.

The President got into the POW question this morning. He wants to meet with Flynn, the Senior Officer of the POW's, who's now back. He wants to see him as soon as possible and right after that announce the May 24 dinner. Got into some discussion of POW gifts, decided he wants to give each of them cuff links, each of the wives pins, each of the kids, a bow pin for the girls and tie clips for the boys, plus an ashtray or something like that for their homes, plus a Unit Citation type of thing and a framed copy for each POW. He wants a full plan worked out on that, he wants to go ahead with May 24. I talked to Bob Hope and the date's okay with him, he's supposed to call me back on whether Les Brown will be available and then we'll go ahead. Hope's idea is to put together a show with all the stars that have been over there, like Raquel Welch and Ann Margaret, etcetera.

He got into some PR questions, wants to set up a new plan for circulation of favorable editorials from the outside so that there are no more mailings from the White House and he's trying to figure out how to do that.

Feels that the burden of support on aid to North Vietnam is on Rogers and Richardson and also that they've got to carry the defense budget. We've got to work out the question of how we fight about the Congressional isolationists and they are the key to it.

He got into quite a thing on Watergate again, on the strategies. Still concerned about the appearance of the President covering up and feels that we've got to try to work out of that position by releasing the Segretti data or something.

He also got into staff assignments, feels that Shultz is spread way too thin. He's the senior man on labor, Russian trade, economic policy, Treasury items, monetary policy, energy and so forth. He thinks we've got to get Ash more active on the management side. That Ehrlichman's role has got to be more as an advocate, leaving the substance to Cole, and we need to parcel these assignments out better. Let Flanigan go back to being the businessmen's guy, so Ehrlichman



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doesn't have to do that. Find a way to point Ehrlichman and Shultz better. We do need to handle the Congressional side, and he's interested in the possibilities of getting a present member of Congress to come over to replace Timmons. Feels we've got to man-to-man each of the Cabinet members on key Congressmen, especially Lynn and Weinberger. And wanted to explore bringing MacGregor back as a Congressional member, because he's got some enthusiasm.

End of March 16.