



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

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Friday, February 19.

The big flap this morning was a story in the paper that Fred Russell had been fired, which had the President very much distressed and thoroughly disgusted. This came out of a semi-ambiguous statement by Rog Morton and some pretty clear-cut efforts on the part of Interior Department staff to chop Russell up. He was also concerned that there wasn't any real coverage of the Woodrow Wilson speech last night, but that was basically inevitable. We'll follow-up with mailings and that sort of thing, and that probably will get us at least some mileage.

He told Ziegler to make a point of stating in his briefing that it was absolutely not true that Russell was fired and to really build him up as the type of man that's badly needed in government, etcetera.

He raised the point again of his concern about Kissinger's staff, the fact that the news today reports that one more has turned left—this time Mort Halperin going to the Common Cause staff. He wants me to work with Haig and make sure that Henry examines his staff very closely and is really set to kick out any potential traitors and not to let any others in.

We had a session with the Physical Fitness Council this morning, which I did not attend, but apparently the President was superb in a very light way in his remarks. He was somewhat concerned that we didn't have as good a turnout as we should have for it.

This afternoon he did the YR Leadership Conference gathering and apparently got a spectacular reception, and again did an excellent job, culminating by sitting at the piano and playing *God Bless America* while they all sang. He was furious to learn that the Vice President had not been scheduled to talk with them and that nobody was on their agenda to discuss revenue sharing; so he booked Ehrlichman in for tomorrow afternoon. He's somewhat distressed by this whole-- the evidence that this shows of the ineffective follow-up that must be going on in our domestic programs. Ehrlichman and I had a long session with Ed Morgan in the morning-- with each-- just the two of us in the morning and then with Ed Morgan this afternoon, trying to work out a better



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way of approaching this. We've suggested that Morgan use Fred Malek as a management consultant and try to get some backup help on how to structure his operation and get more going on it.

End of February 19.