



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

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Friday, April 9.

We got into quite a discussion with Ziegler this morning on several PR items, particularly the Calley question, as a result of the problem of the letter from the prosecutor, Daniel. The President now feels that Ehrlichman should not have answered the questions regarding the Calley case when he announced the President's decision to review it. He feels we have to educate our people, not to be responsive and to recognize that a briefing is not for the benefit of the press.

He also got into the Scott flap on the withdrawal dates. Scott is now saying that the President does have a definite date in mind, and the President spent considerable time briefing Ziegler on how to handle that, to shoot it down by making the point that he was present at the briefing, and that we have a plan for total American withdrawal, but the President said he would not discuss the matter of a final date, because that would jeopardize our three goals. He said the date depends on what happens, and therefore, he can't discuss it. He further went on to say that while he has a plan, it would be destructive to that plan to have any discussion of a fixed date. You can be certain of total withdrawal, but there is no date set for it, and that would greatly weaken the chances to end the war sooner. Scott then should say that the President did not tell him there was a fixed date, that the issue is total withdrawal, not the date of it. And Ziegler should say he talked to Scott, and they're incorrectly interpreting you, and make the point that an integral part of the plan is that there is no straitjacket of a fixed date. When Ron went out, the President made the point that Ron does an excellent job in these briefings, and he was particularly pleased with that.

He hit me on making sure that we don't appoint any more establishment people to any commissions, etcetera. He wants to go for Midwest, Southern and Western people, and not pick up any more Eastern establishment types.

Later this morning, he had a meeting with Nancy Hanks and Len Garment on the whole culture thing. The President was in great spirits and joking with them on a lot of the culture items. He made the point on the Hershorn that we can't let it go modern, which is a bit of a problem since that's all it is. So he urged Nancy to do the best we can to change it. Then he talked about the



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need to take Easterners off the Board and put some Midwest and Westerners on. He agreed to do a talk to the Arts Foundation. He got into quite a discussion on the movies, and the need to reverse the antitrust divestiture order and let the producers get a piece of the action.

He later decided to do the ASNE without television, so as to let the war issue move off of the TV screen for a couple of weeks. He feels he can't avoid a large number of questions on the war, and that the way to solve the problem is just not to put the thing on television. He did agree to permit film. All of this turning out to be basically what Scali was recommending.

In the afternoon, we went to Good Friday church services at St. John's across from Lafayette Park. All was worked out on the basis of a last minute run, but somehow someone got the word, and when we arrived there were a half a dozen minister-types standing out in front, shouting "Peace Now." The President went in and remained for the twenty minute service, and then as he went out a different door, the demonstrators had gathered there and were chanting again, this time something about Christ died to save men's lives, or something. The President's reaction was, of course, that he would not go to Gettysburg for Easter services, since it had been announced he was going and that would just set-up more demonstrations. So we had to work out a plan for canceling that and setting up an unannounced trip to Thurmont for Easter services. I left for Williamsburg at 4:00. The President left for Camp David at 5:30 to join his family there for the Easter weekend.

End of April 9.