



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

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Wednesday, May 26th. Back in the mill in Washington. Actually he had a light schedule set for today, the address to the Associated Council of the Arts. But the news this morning featured the funeral in New York of the policeman who had been shot in the back, and the President was extremely disturbed that we had apparently missed this point, had done nothing to tie into it. He feels that this is exactly the kind of thing Dick Moore should be watching, and he wanted us to get going on trying to think of what could be done as of now. It's too late to make phone calls, and so forth, but, that we could push Mitchell to come up with a law, get a statement from the President drafted, try to really make some mileage on this. As the day wore on, he became more concerned with this and called a meeting this afternoon of Mitchell, Ehrlichman, and J. Edgar Hoover to get into the whole subject, after he had spent an hour with Colson going over the PR and general follow-up on it. As a result, we'll probably get some pretty good action.

At the Arts Council deal, he was considering doing a drop by afterwards at a foundation conference on narcotics, and we had the press moving to it and everything all set up, when the President discovered that Dr. Brown, the head of the NIMH had been on the program and was still on the platform, and he refused to go on the platform with him, so we shot out and headed back to the White House.

He made the point earlier this morning that he wants to put out a statement on marijuana that's really strong, as he said, one that tears the ass out of them. He also commented on the question of why all the Jews seem to be the ones that are for liberalizing the regulations on marijuana. He wants to find a way to hit hard, head-on, dramatic, do it through Congress. As a follow-up on this, he has Ehrlichman and Krogh going and I think they'll probably be coming up with something pretty good.



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He had Henry in for a while this morning before going over to the Arts Council, and we settled on doing Midway the 28th, so Henry can complete his meeting first. We also decided to do the press conference on Tuesday, and have Ziegler announce it today. He then delivered himself of a whole series of fascinating Nixonisms as he discussed various international matters with Henry. In talking about the problem of India invading Pakistan...

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Duration: 16 seconds

...the President made the point that the Indians need a mass famine. He also quoted Ayub Khan as having told him, in reference to the Johnson and Kennedy Administrations, whom he felt had betrayed him,...

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...that they have an old saying in their country that trust is like a thin thread, once you break it, it's very hard to splice together again.

He brought this up in the context of Laos, making the point that in effect we had broken our thin thread with the American people as to the winding down of the war when we moved into Laos, and that it's going to be very hard to put that together again. He made the point to Henry that all wars are close. This was also in reference to Laos and the question of if we'd only hung on two weeks longer, we would have had a success there instead of the mess that we ended up with; but he said to Henry, You've got to realize that all wars are close. That nobody wins big in any war...



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Duration: 5 seconds

...unless, of course, you're fighting the Italians.

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Then he got to talking about the fact that foreign policy was not doing us any real good, although we had accomplished a lot of things. And he explained that to Henry's country, the intellectuals and the social jet set, etcetera, we're doing an outstanding job, but in what he referred to as my country—that is, the plain folks out in the middle of America—they don't know anything about what you're doing on SALT and all these other things, they just want things to simmer down and be quiet, and to them we have not accomplished very much.

Then he got to talking about election issues and made the ironic point that the only, of all the major issues, the only one that is a sure thing for us is Vietnam; that all the rest are in doubt, but we know precisely what we're going to do and where we're going to be on Vietnam.

We had some discussion of when and how to notify Rogers about the Sainteny meeting and some of the other activities, and the President's going to call, or actually, he called Rogers while we were in there, to set up a meeting Thursday afternoon on China going into the UN.



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He got into some more analysis of the trip, feeling that his briefing materials were way too bulky and that it should be gotten down to a couple of pages, with some backup material if needed. Most of the stuff is useless, and he feels it reflects on our staff and indicates that we have too much staff who are making work by going through the same stuff over and over. He feels we've got to have one guy in charge and have him pull it all together. He then made the comment that the bigger the staff, the more paper you get. What we need is a tough editor-manager type. He felt, however, that the advancing for the trip couldn't have been better. We still have a problem regarding stops in motorcades, but overall it had worked out extremely well.

He spent the afternoon at the EOB and the meeting with Ehrlichman and others, and called me after I got home just to see if there were any late development; was pleased with the Congressional situation—we defeated another bad amendment—and it would certainly appear that our successes of last week have had their effect on the reaction of Congress.

I had a long talk this afternoon with Mitchell on a number of political things. He called to explain the background on Taft's decision to go ahead as a favorite son in Ohio, and Mitchell feels we should let him do it. He also came up with an opportunity we have to work with AMPAC on a health bill that they could put their lobbyists behind to give us some help. So I discussed this with Ehrlichman to see if we could work that out.

End of May 26th.