



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

National Archives and Records Administration, Online Public Access Catalog Identifier: 7787364

Wednesday, July 21.

President had the day clear except for a scheduled meeting at 3:00 with Connally and a group of us on labor. He came in late and went right over to the EOB, had a long session with Henry and then called me over. I used the opportunity to go through the whole scheduling folder and get all of the backlog of schedule stuff cleaned up. He agreed to do a quick trip to Iowa and Ohio on Saturday a week, to do a dam dedication and the Football Hall of Fame. Then the following week, he wants to go to Maine and New Hampshire. He's still planning on doing the California vacation.

We also got into some discussion of the China trip. Henry had hit him on the idea of having Ehrlichman doing the advance, and had refused to allow Ehrlichman to go with him and is very much upset about Ehrlichman going at all. Henry and I discussed this a couple of times later in the day, and he's going to try and get it shifted. The President's concern, of course, is to keep Kissinger out of logistics, but I think we can work that out by having Chapin, or somebody, go with Henry. President also thought we ought to take a really hard look on what we want to do regarding press on the trip. We'll obviously have to take all the networks and the wire services and wire photos, but then the question is how much we take in the way of newspaper, magazine and radio people. We talked about using San Francisco as the point of departure, stopping in Wake on the way over, and then stopping in Alaska on the way back and going on to Washington. President said he's going to take charge of the advance himself, especially the Secret Service and staff thing, keeping it to an absolute minimum, cutting down on the numbers, that there's no reason to mar this with a lot of extra people.

He talked about Kennedy, Dave Kennedy, as Ambassador to Japan. President wanted me to discuss this with Connally. He has no confidence in State's choice. Wants a senior businessman, thinks Kennedy would be ideal; so if Connally has no objection, President will try to name him. Got into discussion on the youth program. President questioned what was being done and feels that we can use China as a takeoff point for youth, especially this fall, that we could really



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change things around. He thought that we should get a task force on youth in China and really whip up enthusiasm. He got Colson in to make the point that we needed to do that, plus more general hailing of the President to really build up the fact of the initiative. Also that we should exploit the leadership thing in every possible way.

Regarding the YAF, he said we shouldn't worry about their criticism. We've got to realize how low their influence is, that they are unreasonable, and we probably just have to let them go. That the price that we have to pay for them is too great. The question is, where were they before China, on Laos, Cambodia, and etcetera? They weren't speaking up for us then, so why should we worry about them speaking against us now?

The President was horrified by a proposal Kissinger made to go on a secret trip to Hanoi after he leaves Peking on the next trip. President's point being that Henry is now getting carried away with his secret diplomacy and going too far. We discussed the Finch situation, and he's concerned about Bob, thinks he may be going through the Stassen syndrome of wanting a job, such as a Senatorship, so much that he's lost all his judgment and perspective. I think that may very well be true. Kissinger raised the problem of Stans requesting a visit to Russia, and we agreed that that would be turned down. Stans had his administrative assistant approach Dobrynin directly on it, which didn't make Henry very happy. Henry also thinks that Grunwald of *Time* magazine is capable of switching, that if he is convinced that we are the gurus and the leaders, that we could switch him over, and that it's worth our making the effort to try to do so.

At 3:00, we had a two hour meeting with Shultz, Connally, Ehrlichman, and Colson. President first raised the point of whether we couldn't develop a program of issuing bonds, government bonds for special purpose projects, as a way to get big things done, such as general research, cure for cancer, environmental questions, and so on. He says we have to find a way to do big things, but without raising taxes, and this might be the way to do it. Also it would establish a sort of market value on some of these things, in that if people won't buy the bonds to support them, then we can make the claim that there isn't sufficient public support to carry out the project. He then



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raised the point that Connally has a theory that it's good to have an enemy, and that one of the best we could have now is John Kenneth Galbraith, who has come out yesterday in favor of permanent government controls on the economy. The President feels that we should have a concerted effort to blast him, as the economic spokesman for the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, their chief guru. Now he's finally said what he really meant. He wants then that, by hitting this, we can turn the control argument our way. In other words, he feels we can win this debate, if we scare them enough on it.

He then got into the basic subject of the meeting, which was the whole labor/management problem. The question of whether we should write off the unions or try to work with them. The key, he pointed out, is how to do the best we can with the rank and file, recognizing that the leadership ranges from strongly anti to, at best, neutral. The specific question was the planned meeting in September of labor and management, regarding the big picture, which we were going to try to do to get bipartisan appeal, but it means asking Meany to play a major part, and the question is whether we want to do that. Connally said he felt there was no justification for an all-out war on labor, that the September meeting could be a good sounding board, but we shouldn't expect labor to bore-in on productivity and do anything about it. He says labor is not irretrievably lost to Nixon. We can get to the rank and file, especially on the issue of jobs, and that particularly, in the American position in the world economy—our trade relations. On that issue, labor will be our strongest ally. Also in the field of ecology, because they're sick and tired of it; they're not interested in losing jobs in order to clean up the environment.

The President added that, although it's sort of a long philosophical thing then, making the point that the ordinary working guy is made up of the two-thirds of the people in this country who never went to college. And that in this period of our history, the leaders and the educated class are decadent. Whenever you ask for patriotic support, they all run away: the college types, the professors, the elite, etcetera. So he concludes the more a person is educated, he becomes brighter in the head and weaker in the spine. When you have to call on the nation to be strong—on such things as drugs, crime, defense, and our basic national position—the educated people



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and the leader class no longer has any character, and you can't count on them. We can only turn for support to the non-educated people. He says look at Meany, Fitzsimmons, and Brennan. They're shortsighted, partisan, hate Nixon politically, but they represent the constituency of uneducated people, which plus the farm heartland, are all that's left of the character of this nation. He's concerned whether the country really has the character to do what must be done. And he cited his meetings with college-- the group of college presidents, the new managerial business class, the science advisory group, who have absolutely no character or guts. Also the ministers, except for the Billy Graham-type know nothings, so-called. They're all permissive, with no character. And the nation's editors and reporters have no spine or guts left. So where do you go? If you don't communicate with the labor leaders, they can go to the masses, the rank and file of labor, and say we don't care. So we've got to communicate with them. Plus they are men, not softies. So we have to find a way, intelligently, to fight them where they're wrong, plus to go over their heads, when it's necessary, to their troops. He feels the country is in a great moral crisis, a crisis of character, and we won't get leadership from our class. When we need support on tough problems, the uneducated are the ones that are with us. So it was generally agreed that we must maintain an open public communication, regardless of how the labor leaders kick the Administration. There are many ways to get the working people with us. Jobs is the main one, but the racial issue and a lot of others can also be used. The key is really the jobs issue and job security, and we've got to avoid appearing to be anti-union. We have to get that cast right, and Connally feels that the way to approach it is the international picture. The President emphasized we need to dramatize it by a number, such as a hundred million jobs by '76, or something. Also we need to keep Meany willing to look the other way, if the locals take a walk on the Democratic candidates. President feels the Democrats will now have to nominate an ultra-liberal, that there's no way they can avoid it, and that they then will have trouble pulling labor in behind them, and that's our chance. Paragraph.

He then ended the meeting—all of that took about two hours—asked Connally and me to stay behind. He raised directly the Vice Presidential question, asked me to report to Connally on my



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talk with Harlow about the Vice President's three out of four chance evaluation that he will not run for reelection. We all agreed, as the President and I had yesterday, that if he's not going to go for reelection, he's got to resign now and let the President appoint somebody. President then made the major pitch again for the fact that "somebody" has to be Connally; that he's the only man who can be President, and that the appointments got to be made on the consideration of the man may very well become President. Connally emphasized, as he said he had with the President the day—two days ago—that he had no ambition for the job, and he then went on to say that, as a matter of fact, he wasn't at all sure he could stand being President, that it seemed like a ver-- I mean Vice President, that it seemed like a very useless job, and that he was much better off as a Cabinet officer. The President jumped on that, emphasized that that depended totally on who the Vice President was and how he worked with the President, that with the two of them and the relationship that they have, the Vice President could be an extremely meaningful job. Much more so than it's ever been in history, that he would use him as an alternate President, and I'm convinced he really means that.

He didn't try to push Connally to any kind of decision, in fact very carefully avoided pushing him at all, but obviously is giving him a pretty good shove in the right direction. It was, in its way, quite an historic meeting, and it will be fascinating to see what comes of it. It's clear that Connally feels strongly that Agnew does have to go, and he doesn't have any suggestion as to who would be a replacement for him, other than himself. So it's my opinion that he's basically decided that he'd take it, but he's obviously not going to ask for it, because he doesn't want to be in that position. He'll have a pretty strong hand to deal from now, and it may be very difficult to work with him, but it will be interesting to see.

End of July 21.