



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

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Saturday, July 31.

We spent last night in Canton. This morning President had me talk to Hodgson to get an update on the steel strike and the rail strike. The guys have been negotiating all night on both and still don't have settlements, and Hodgson seemed pretty discouraged, thinks there's a real possibility of failure and definitely does not want the President to get involved. So we hang tight on those for now at least. We got into some discussion on Air Force One on the way to Iowa about the wage/price thing, and I made Rumsfeld's point regarding doing some symbolic jawboning, and the President basically bought it, says he now wants to pick ten major industries where there may be strikes coming and bring them in to get at prices and wages. He feels it's not as dangerous now as it was a while back. He also talked about the need for Agnew to get out into the country and go for crowds, along the basis that the President has been doing.

He had breakfast with John Knight, and apparently it went quite well. He wants some follow-up on that. Knight gave him some advice on Ohio politics, etcetera. In Iowa we did the dedication at the dam. Again another big crowd, not as enthusiastic—because they were all jammed in for the dedication, and there wasn't the opportunity—but there was some darn good handshaking. The President reworked his speech and brought in the need to be number one, as he had used last night at the football dinner; and he wants Price to work on developing that theme that this is a good country; that we do need to be number one because of the economic competition in the world and because of our position to help the world, if we're number one, which would not be the case if the Communists got that.

We had a lot of discussion of schedule things also, on the plane, because he is now reviewing the thought of getting out into the country more again. We went on up to Camp David after returning from Iowa, and I did another check on the strike situation, and it appears that we're still in a problem. And the President talked to Hodgson just as we landed at the airport. He says the problem is still very difficult and problematical, and he still doesn't want President-- Presidential involvement. Then late tonight Shultz called at Camp David and said he wanted to wake the



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President up, because we were at the point where we had to make a basic Presidential decision on the steel deal. The negotiators were 1 and a-- 1 percent or 1 1/2 percent apart, and Abel says he's as low as he'll go. The companies said to Hodgson, "Do you want us to give in?" They're trying to trap us into telling them to. We then were in the position of having to decide whether to go along with the settlement or not, and Shultz felt that we should, but felt that the President should make the final decision on it, that we now have a chance to get a settlement. So we'll take a stab at it.

End of July 31.