



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

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Saturday, September 25.

The big item today, as we left for our Western trip, was the question of the Pacific Coast dock strike negotiations. Shultz talked to me last night. We set it up that he would try to move on it today. He had Curt Counts come up to Portland, and they decided this morning to have him bring the Pacific maritime head and the-- and Harry Bridges up also, and they, in effect, committed them to meeting with the President. So we shifted the basic news emphasis today to that set up. Shultz and Ehrlichman and Hodgson were going to meet with them first, and then they would have a short meeting with the President after he got in to Portland. We maintained contact by phone during the day as we set that up, and it worked out pretty well.

The President had me up during the flight out to Montana, mainly to go over little odds and ends. On the dock strike thing, he wanted me to make it clear to Shultz that his desire was to use the Taft-Hartley injunction process, and he discounts Shultz' argument against that, which is that it doesn't meet the requirements, because he says Labor always says that a strike doesn't meet the Taft-Hartley requirements, and that actually the President can decide on that.

He had some ideas on schedule and logistics and got back to the point of the Detroit Economic Club appearance, that we need theatrical direction on TV performances, to work out the entry, the explanation of the setup, the close, and so on, which still was bothering him. We had a good stop in Montana. The main story out of that being that the load of cement that the President and Mansfield were supposed to dump at Libby Dam didn't work right, and so the photographers got a great picture of the two of them, and the Congressman straining to pull the rope.

The Portland session was a Q&A, which went very well. A good range of questions and good pacing. President opened it with an announcement that he had met with Bridges and Flynn, which he did just before the media briefing, and that they had agreed to go ahead with negotiations, try to get the thing settled in the next week. We had a fairly substantial group of demonstrators--not very many in number, but very noisy--outside the President's room in the hotel, which created a problem from 5:00, after the media briefing, until about 7:00, when we



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finally had the Secret Service invoke the federal law and move them out, which they did without incident. Worked out fine, but it was fairly rough up to that point, because they really were making an awful lot of noise and were driving the President right up the wall.

He had me into the room at the hotel in the evening and was talking about the Supreme Court appointment and his feeling that he really should go for a woman judge, if we can get a good, tough conservative. He thinks it's-- this is the opportunity to score on that point, that we would make tremendous political mileage, in that, while many people would be opposed to it, nobody would vote against him because of it. On the other hand, a lot of people who were in favor of it would change their votes to Nixon because of such an appointment.

I gave him a report on the Mansfield amendment, that the leadership in the House feel they aren't going to be able to hold the line against it this time around. So he wants Henry to develop a revised game plan for his idea of going to Russia now; to assume that Congress passes the Mansfield thing in October, and what does that do to our bargaining thing, what affect on our position, and so on.

End of September 25.