



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

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Monday, October 18th. Staff meeting this morning, we started the discussion of the Supreme Court problem; the PR problems on our being attacked on mediocrity. And Ehrlichman said that he, his team of Dave Young and John Dean, who had been quizzing Herschel Friday in Arkansas, were concerned because he has no convictions and, therefore, could really be bad. They said he's a typical lawyer who can take either side. That Mitchell waves us off, he's not concerned about it, but they feel it could really make him an unfortunate appointment. So I raised this later with the President, and the whole question of the PR problem on the Court, and I think got him thinking about it a little more in that light. Whereas before he had been inclined to go along basically with Mitchell's recommendations, whatever they might be. He's decided that, as soon as the Court thing's settled, he wants to make the announcement at 7:30 television time, so we can get our side across on the appointees and not give the press the shot of a Q and A. He did decide he'd better meet with Mitchell this afternoon and go over it, which he did, and they sort of reopened the whole question with some new possibilities now.

He went out to Fort Dietrich this morning to announce the turning it over to our drug, or our health operation for the war on cancer, and was not particularly pleased with the gimmicky nature of that particular exercise and doesn't think we should do those again.

Henry is in Hawaii on his way to China, and the President raised some concerns, particularly about a George Sherman story in the Star last week that implied that Henry was dominating the making of all foreign policy. The President was quite concerned about it, first, because it's not true, particularly the China initiative, for instance, was not Henry's; second, that it would drive Rogers up the wall; third, it creates the impression that the President's doing all this for cynical reasons and that he doesn't know anything about what he's doing; and fourth, he thinks this results from the way Henry does his briefings, and that it creates a problem. In any event, he wanted me to talk to Haig and try to get that worked out...



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...as well as to lean hard on him on the fact that Henry is not to take any trip to Moscow or to Viet-, North Vietnam to try and settle the war. That the President totally disapproves of this, and that Henry's not to go to Moscow either on that or on summit preparations.

The President also re-raised the public broadcasting thing again. He's fairly upset at the inability of our people to get control of any of it, and feels that we've got to find a way, somehow, to avoid letting them stockpile all the anti-Nixon newscasters and subsidize them. We have Malek working with Colson and Flanigan to try and get at this. The problem is, that we don't have working control of the board, and there's virtually no other way that we can take any effective action. This evening was the opening of the Eisenhower Theater at Kennedy Center. The President attended. It was a good opening, I guess, but rather a dull play—Ibsen's *A Doll's House*.

End of October 18th.