



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

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Friday, April 7.

The President had me over at the house for three hours today during a beautiful sunshiny morning. His principal point of discussion was the problem of our response and activity on domestic issues. He made the point that Ehrlichman has let down the busing hearings thing, he's got to understand that this is his responsibility, that all that matters is the story, not the messages and all that. The problem here is that we've lost the ball. He said he's going to write a memo to Ehrlichman laying out his dissatisfaction with the domestic PR situation and is going to spell it out very clearly that he expects Ehrlichman to drop the substantive activity and move to the more important thing of what word we get out. I strongly encourage this and think that it would be a very constructive move if he does it, because I think we've got a problem now in Ehrlichman getting bogged down and to a great degree losing interest.

On ITT, we still tried to determine strategy. The President felt that I should call Mitchell and make the point that what's important here is not confirming the Attorney General, it's ending the hearings. That I should level with him and make the point that there's too much in the record to risk having it come out. The President believes the Republicans should boycott the hearings. He went back to our meeting with Kleindienst in the library and pointed out that Kleindienst was wrong, MacGregor and Colson were right in their view on that.

He had some other ideas for sort of PR follow-up on ITT, such as getting the story out of the number of people that we see at the White House who have special interests and that there's nothing wrong with doing that, that it's a part of our job.

The other thing we got into in depth was the San Diego Convention question. The President feeling that the move just won't wash, that people will say it's because ITT didn't come through with the money. He suggested a compromise, in inviting all the campaign leaders to San Clemente for a meeting after the Convention, like the Gettysburg farm deal. This is if we move the convention to Miami, make it a campaign planning session with all the governors, candidates and so on, with big TV coverage. He's concerned about Reagan's attitude, if we were to move out



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of San Diego, and feels that we need a very real reason to move, that we can't fake a move like this. He thinks we ought to get some other PR judgment on it, and I talked to Mitchell later in the day. He said we're progressing on the planning for the move, although it's not irreversible, that we do have a good record on a real reason for moving in the convention hall problem. He feels the problems are: first, the money; second, the potential of the-- not being able to get the hall built; third, the labor bind we may be in on June 2; fourth, the demonstrators; and fifth, the ITT-Sheraton question. His assessment of the San Diego people is that it'd be 50-50 if we moved out. He think we can make a documented-- he thinks we can make a documented case to Reagan that'll wash all right. He thinks that we've got to get someone to talk to Miami and get that worked out. He is still very much in favor, apparently, of moving the Convention.

End of April 7.