



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

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Wednesday, June 28.

The President holed up today to work on the press conference preparation for tomorrow night. He did have Colson and me in at noon for a general political discussion. He got going on the analysis of the '60 campaign again, and particularly hitting the Ted Kennedy quote today, that Nixon was way ahead of Kennedy in '60 and then fell behind, which he thinks should be shot down because it's not true. Talked about the need to keep McGovern in the South and to keep him busy. Got into the Lincoln amnesty question again. Still wanting to get that cleared up, so McGovern can't get off the hook on it. Wants to be sure we put a lid on stories of how well-computerized we are, and we should stop anybody from speculating on the President's role in the campaign. Make the point that the Presidency has to come first. We should keep our people away from the press and Teddy White and so on. They should just say they don't have time to talk. We need to build up the volunteers, the youth and so forth. Tell the pros to work and not be seen.

Had some discussion on the Billy Graham thing and then I talked to Graham later this evening. Said he had been talking to the man who organized the Dallas Explo '72 thing. He's 29, unflappable, the best organizer he's ever seen, and very strongly pro-Nixon. He's interested in the possibility of helping us with youth, but feels he can't do it personally because he's now become too well known. Instead he can put together a group to pull this whole crew together. Billy asked how far he had the authority to go in putting this together, and could he put their people in touch with ours and I said yes. He wants to get their three or four top notch people that are in touch with the entire religious wing of the youth, with Graham and Bill Bright staying in the shadows and helping from the background. He thinks there are about 50 major national youth organizations that are conservative religious groups with massive names and addresses, and that they can get people to take leaves of absence and work on organizing them. He told me to wait until he pulls it together. He'll work on this Monday or Tuesday and then get some seasoned, trusted people, top drawer national types to counteract the McGovern operation. He's very concerned about letting the view get across that McGovern is the religious leader in the campaign because he is a former preacher and the son of a preacher.



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Talked some with the President about the Mitchell situation. He's come to the conclusion, as have I, that Mitchell's got to pull out of the campaign and that we'd better put someone else in. I talked about this with Ehrlichman and Higby some today. And our general agreement is that MacGregor is the one to do it. Interestingly enough, the President has come up with the same view. So he told me to pursue it with Mitchell and see what I could work out. I couldn't get to John today, although he has left with Martha and come back to Washington. So I'll get him tomorrow morning.

The President called me from Camp David after he went up there late this afternoon to work on his press conference, in a huge flap because Mrs. Nixon's all upset about some newspaper story that we've hired a girl to handle the daughters and Pat Nixon's scheduling. Some more of the same old stuff, where she resents anything implied that she has to have any help, and I guess Connie Stuart fed the flames a little on this one, too.

End of June 28.