



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

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Thursday, June 29.

The President stayed at Camp David until mid-afternoon then came down. Holed up at the EOB for the rest of the afternoon preparing for the press conference. He did have me come over right after he got back to give him a report on the Mitchell situation. I had a long talk with John just before that, and fortunately he's come up also with the conclusion that he's got to leave, and he made the big pitch to me as to why, giving me the whole background story on Martha. The fact that she felt Pat Nixon had snubbed her at the Duke alumni reception, and then very definitely Pat had snubbed her at the celebrities reception in California last weekend or the weekend before last. After that, John left without telling her about the Watergate caper. She discovered that in the papers or on TV, blew her stack, got drunk, told her FBI agent and John's secretary, who were staying at the Newporter with her, that her husband had every Democrat in Washington bugged, and then decided she'd call a reporter and tell them so. The FBI agent got concerned at that, called John in Washington and got Fred LaRue, who said if she starts to do that, pull her phone out. So the FBI guy took his key, went up to her room, unlocked the door, went in and pulled her phone out. She then had a monumental tantrum. Started throwing things at him, demolishing the room. They locked her in. She busted the window with her hand, cut herself badly. They had to get a doctor, who had to throw her on the bed and give her a shot in order to subdue her.

Mitchell then sent some friends of theirs out from New York to get her back. They took her to the Westchester Country Club. The press got in to her there. She gave her story out. Her whole pitch is that she's absolutely serious about leaving John if he won't leave the campaign. He feels she's suicidal as well as a little cracked, plus drinking very heavily, and that there's nothing he can do to cure it. He's afraid she'll jump off the balcony at the Watergate. So he's got to quit. He'll stay on as a consultant. Help us with the campaign, but will move to New York and pull out. That solved my having to raise the thing. I played the reluctant role in this instance and it worked out very well. John also listed the possible successors. He had Rumsfeld, MacGregor, Bill Brock, Weinberger, and Bigsby from New York. Bigsby, of course, is out because the President doesn't know him; Rumsfeld because the President has no confidence in him; Brock



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because he's a sitting Senator and wouldn't have the time and we'd be stuck with his positions; Weinberger because we can't move him out of the job he's in. That leaves MacGregor, which was our choice anyway. Apparently we'll be able to convince Mitchell on that.

McGovern had a bad day today. He lost most of the California delegation on a Credentials Committee ruling and blew his stack, which looked pretty bad on television. Then he's been widely picked up with his quote, that "begging is better than bombing", that he'd be "happy to go beg Hanoi to release the prisoners." The President had his press conference tonight on TV. Went very well. He let it run 45 minutes. Got a lot of good questions. Some pretty bad ones. He was in better form in a sense because he wasn't so completely programmed. More relaxed, some good quips, little nervousness.

End of June 29.