



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

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Thursday, July 6.

We had our MacGregor meetings today starting at about 10:40 with MacGregor, Malek, Timmons and Ehrlichman. The President got into a discussion of how Timmons should make the legislative points, the specifics on our legislative program, and so on for the press. Told him to signal some vetoes, that he should hit the Democratic tactic of overloading the bills so that we will veto regardless of the purpose of the bill, if it's on a reckless course of exceeding budget request. The President considers that more important than all legislative proposals is to hold down the cost of living and avoid a tax increase. So he will examine each bill with this thought in mind. It's time to call a halt, and with the support of responsible members of Congress who will not do these cynical things in the election year. There'll be no compromise on HR 1 under any circumstances. He says the purpose between the conventions should be to get a vote up or down in the Congress. We should avoid putting partisan politics above the public interest. Congress owes it to the country to vote the President's propositions up or down. The top of the list is busing. Any Congressman or Senator who votes for any increase over the budget must assume the responsibility for rising prices, and for the possibility of leading to a tax increase.

That gave Timmons his attack plan, and he left. We then went into the general discussion of the MacGregor operation. The President raised first the question of relations with Mitchell. Made the point we must not embarrass him, but we need great decisiveness in what we're doing. The President questioned Magruder as Chief of Staff and MacGregor assured him that that's not his role, that will be Malek's role. We talked about the Democratic organization. He uses the front for big names and as a legitimate instrument for enlisting Democrats in the key states. That it should vary state by state, and the President mentioned the Paul Ziffren possibility in California, where Henry Kissinger apparently has talked to Ziffren, and he is willing to come out for us. Maybe we should pluralize it with a member of different Democratic operations. That's a possibility. Tell MacGregor to get the Colson operation under control but let people think they're running it.



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On women, MacGregor said he was using Hutar as a recruiter and was considering the question of a woman as co-campaign chairman. The President said he wasn't satisfied with Hutar. On surrogates the President pointed out the problem is to give them worthwhile things to do. That we should use Cabinet and White House wives to do telephoning, set up a phone network and work the small states, and that we should be getting women on TV more. That we should maintain a low visibility at the Democratic Convention. No truth squad or anything of that sort. MacGregor should not be tied to the office running the details and all. That Malek should do that. MacGregor should concentrate on the big plays, and he said that very few make the move onto the national scene effectively because they think parochially, and it's important that MacGregor not fall into that trap. He urged Clark to build up some personal surrogates to himself, who will do some of the speaking and handling for him. Let them cover the small states. As far as the President's time, he will make no appearances with other candidates unless that helps us. There will be no effort to win Senate seats and so on. Others must do this.

On Agnew, we had a sensitive problem. We should use Mitchell. I should work out arrangements for the Vice President's schedule planning. We should give word to all speakers that they should not hit McGovern this week during the Democratic Convention. We should use Finch's judgment regarding California problems, but keep him out of operations in the state. That pretty well wrapped up the MacGregor meeting.

The President and I then met for a couple of hours with Ehrlichman afterwards. Got into the Watergate caper problem. Walters apparently has finked out and spilled the beans to Pat Gray, which complicates the issue substantially. The President then made the point that on the campaign issues, the economic issue is their ground not ours, and we should not play to it. We want the debate first on foreign policy, Vietnam, amnesty, POW's, bugout, Defense, and so on. Then we want a debate on busing, where it matters, on redistribution of wealth, discretely handled, on abortion, amnesty, pot, and the whole homosexual thing. He pointed out that we need to get Scranton into the Pennsylvania campaign. He's concerned about Colson overplaying the unemployment figures which are very good this week, but will get bad again next month.



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He says he wants to consider the possibility of meeting with the Japanese Prime Minister, the new one, maybe in Hawaii and also meeting with the Italian in Washington.

He got into the subject of the acceptance speech and says he wants a draft from four or five people, not just a Price draft. He wants Buchanan, Hallett, and Andrews to try it. Get their ideas, not long philosophical advice but drafts of what they think he should say. He felt the 4th of July speech was rather sophomoric and not a good speech.

End of July 6.