



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

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Thursday, July 20.

The President and I met with Armand Hammer today. Ostensibly for him to report to the President on his trip to Russia and his big oil deal with the Soviets, but actually for us to ask Hammer to let us have Marvin Watson to run the Democrats for Nixon for Connally. Hammer is hysterical, came in with an envelope full of art books and his own story of Russia, told us all about his background in Russia and everything, which was really quite fascinating, but he's obviously completely entranced with himself, and not much of anything else. When we asked him about Watson, he did agree to let him come but said that the problem would be Lyndon Johnson, and he asked that the President call Johnson and ask him to encourage Watson to come with us, that Watson wouldn't make the move without Johnson's OK. After the meeting both the President and I were a little alarmed by that, and the President had me call Connally. He said that under no circumstances should the President call Johnson. Connally is going to tell-- he wants me to tell Hammer, and Connally will tell Watson, and he's going to hit him hard saying to Watson that he didn't realize that Lyndon Johnson controlled his political activities but that if that was the case it was up to him.

One big item today was the whole Wallace situation. Mitchell is convinced that Dent's guys are probably valid, although he reports that Dwayne Andreas had an hour and a half with Wallace yesterday, that Wallace told him he wasn't going to go for a third party, that he's not physically capable, and his wife agreed with this. He'll play his future by ear, but he will not do anything to help McGovern and he wants to keep his options open. He said he had no debts and no need for financial help. Andreas raised the question of his joining the Connally group, and he said he had great respect for Connally but that would destroy his credibility in the Democratic Party. Said he would be in the hospital for a month and then was going to Florida to recuperate.

Dent reports, however, from his meeting with Turnipseed, that things look pretty discouraging. That Turnipseed is not pro-Nixon and not smart. Wants to be paid well, and says he wants to talk Friday or Saturday, which is arranged for a meeting with Mitchell Saturday morning. They think



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they'll help us, he and Beader, by running Wallace. They want to see new polls to convince them otherwise. Say the decision will be made in the next two weeks, and Dent believes these guys are in the saddle in the Wallace operation and that they are the two third party agitators there, that we've got to deal with them. Colson, on the other hand, is dealing with Bill France and Cliff Schneider through Jack Marsh, and Marsh is absolutely convinced that they're on the level. They had an hour and a half with Wallace. Came up here on the Wallace plane, indicating they're interested in the issues as well as money. They said that there have been a lot of other contacts by us, but only they are authorized to deal and that Wallace will verify it if a deal is to be made with them. They got into the money a little big, and France backed away. Said they were only talking about issues and that they've decreased the urgency of money help.

Billy Graham called to say he had talked to the Governor yesterday after the operation and that he would say that there's almost no chance that Wallace would run. Wallace asked whether he would take more votes from the President, and Graham said he would take at least 75 percent. Wallace said he would never turn one hand to help McGovern and that he doesn't have the physical strength to run and that he's 99 percent sure he won't do it, but he won't close the door completely. He did say Eagleton's coming to see him on Monday, and he asked Graham to come to see him and asked him in the meantime to pray for him and indicated that he's concerned because his abscess won't heal.

We got into the VP situation today. The President decided because of the attacks on Javits and so forth that we should get it out of the way. He told me to call Connally and tell him that the VP does want to stay on the ticket and that we feel we ought to get the announcement out of the way now before Connally's on television Sunday and so on. I talked to Connally and he said that he felt the only disadvantage was that it takes all the surprise and suspense out of the Convention, and that we might as well start the attack now, they're going to attack him anyway. On the other hand, if that's the decision that the President is going to make he should go ahead and do it. The problem is that there are a lot of enemies, and also Agnew can't be elected President, saying the same thing Connally had said the other day. He says there's one obstacle—that he has no



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personal considerations—but Agnew did say he wasn't interested in the Vice Presidency unless he was going to go for the top spot in '76, and we've got to recognize he can't be elected in '76. Connally says we've got all the leverage we have right now and we should go with it, otherwise we're hung, and he's a free agent. We shouldn't get into deeper water unless we want to. I reported that back to the President. The President said to get back to Connally and explain to him that the leverage is still there. That we'll give him a graceful way out later on. The President is absolutely convinced that he should not be the candidate and that there's no question on that, but the President has worked out the way to move him out after the election, but now we need to go ahead. The President has made up his mind who it has to be to succeed him, which Connally knows, and he has a way to work that out. He said he wanted Connally to think about that point before the meeting tomorrow night and that he'd discuss it with him later. He'll be laying the foundation in his talk with Agnew which he will do with him on Friday. Also the President will tell him that there's to be no discussion by Agnew of the Presidency. I covered this with Connally tonight, and he had no problems with it.

Watergate situation came up today. The President feels that we shouldn't wait for the ax to fall on Magruder; if he's going to get it, he should get out first. He also liked the idea of exploring the possibility of immunity for Magruder.

He got into some general political strategy. Thinks that we should use some nonpolitical committees that are already in meeting to take on McGovern. That Ehrlichman's got to stay on top of all the domestic issues and be sure to cover them on a political basis. That we should use Laird and Rogers heavily in foreign policy political matters. That someone should keep saying that the Democrats have written off the South. That we should use Father MacLaughlin with Catholic groups in the campaign. We should be doing a better job of organizing Wall Street. That he wants to follow up on the Nixon smear program. To hit them before they hit us. Agreed to have breakfast with George Meany, Monday or Tuesday, or whatever worked out for Meany.



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Colson, Scammon and the President and I went for dinner on the *Sequoia*. General discussion on Scammon political theories, not particularly enlightening, although Colson was entranced by the whole thing.

The President had me up to the Lincoln Sitting Room with him afterwards and chatted generally a little bit. The main point was that he wants MacGregor and Dole to get out some good stories about the strength of our organization, and big things we're doing.

End of July 20.