



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

National Archives and Records Administration, Online Public Access Catalog Identifier: 7787364

Tuesday, August 8.

The President went up to Camp David this afternoon and I went right up from California. We had the Cabinet meeting with a regular briefing like the staff one last week and then a dinner in the new Laurel. The President gave the only talk. Made the point that the President will do no fundraising, the Vice President will be doing a little so the Cabinet stars have to do most of this. They should talk to the public audience, not just those in front of them when they're at a fundraising dinner. They should never get into a Republican/Democrat dialogue. The best way we can help Republicans up and down the ticket is to win.

Regarding the Connally operation, he said we need a separate Democrat activity to make it easy for Democrats. They will talk principles and issues. For Republican candidates, the best thing we can do is build a big vote for the President that we need to sell to the Republicans the idea that millions of Democrats and Independents are joining us. It's a great opportunity to emphasize the positive. We shouldn't worry-- the Cabinet men shouldn't worry about making national news, they'll dominate the local on their speaking things.

On the tactics of attack and strategy, he said what really matters, if the election is close at all, is whether the voters in the last two weeks are thinking about our issue or their issue. So we must not get trapped into defending. We have to focus on the issues they're weak on. For example, the economy. We can talk about cutting inflation in half and unemployment down, and so forth, but those are all defensive points. Instead, we should make the point that a vote for McGovern is a vote to add 80 million people to the welfare rolls and \$40 billion to the budget for that. Hit him on his thousand dollar per person program. Hit him on the \$300 billion added to the budget and raising taxes, wrecking the economy. So the idea of an answer desk is fatal. We must not answer, except just to correct the lies. Then attack where they're weak, but on the same issue. We must talk about peace at home, what we found when we came in crime, drugs, and so forth. The programs we've made. Hit the wave of permissiveness and the positive side of that, the Supreme Court appointments, the four strict constructionists. We're against permissiveness. The next



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

National Archives and Records Administration, Online Public Access Catalog Identifier: 7787364

President will appoint three or four more to the Supreme Court and we have to consider that. Compare the difference in attitude toward law enforcement.

Regarding the economy, we can never win, no matter what we do. We have to keep it from being a loser though. It's a good issue for liberals, a bad issue for responsables. We will always be outbid, so we don't want them thinking about the economy on Election Day.

On foreign policy, the war is a difficult issue for us, because there's no easy answer, but we have a good record. It would be better if we had had the support of the Senate. We don't know what will happen, but the negotiations have been jeopardized by the Senate's actions.

Overall, we have changed the postwar world. The danger of confrontation has been substantially reduced. The chances of peace are much greater. This only happened because we worked on it, and we knew what we were doing as we were working on it. We have to hit foreign policy over and over. Don't assume that the people know. They want peace, but do they know how to get it?

On the point of competence, incumbency is a mixed bag. They'll get rough and strident in a hard attack. We must keep the emphasis on the big game, don't get dragged down by them. Have people thinking of the big initiatives that we've taken: jobs without war; growing economy; peace; open-minded reform. The other point is that the polls now will close the gap as the media shifts to the opposition. We've got to be prepared for that and ready to combat it.

End of August 8.