



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

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Wednesday, March 7.

The President had me in early this morning for quite a long while. Reviewed the stag dinner deal last night is concerned about some way of identifying people when they're introduced. Stans apparently did a good job which pointed out the need to do this at other parties, which we don't get done. I suggested the idea of giving people identification cards to hand to the introducing aides, which he thinks is a great idea, so we're going to try that. He was disturbed that we have the Navy singers for tonight, they had the Army last night, and he thinks that they are much better. It turned out later that Steve had changed this, and we do have the Army tonight, too. The President talked with Rollins and told him to work Harry Dent on developing candidates. Was concerned about whether General Wheeler got a thank you on Vietnam. Talked to Packard on California, and Packard thinks Finch should go for the Senate and raised this with him. Doesn't want Baroody to push Connally, or have Packard do so, and have him head up this committee job, and that led to the question about Laird. He came up with the idea of making Laird counselor to the President. He feels that we need people who can work the Hill, and we need advice inside on how to do it and thought Laird was around town, we ought to get him to do it. Later today, when we were talking he said that he had thought about that some more and thinks the idea of Laird as counselor is a bad idea. But we could make him consultant to the President to advise on strategy, sit in on all meetings and so on, while he's around Washington. Then spend time on the Hill, direct the battle, and so on. He told me to check Harlow first, and then see if we could work it out with Laird.

He decided not to send the Denton letter until we get all the POW's out. Feels we've got to push for a role call amnesty vote. Should start building the social issue. Wants me to call Roger Stevens, making the point that the President noted what he's doing at the Kennedy Center, and here's one vote for Roger Stevens in terms of having clean plays and so on. Referred to one of the lines he developed for his State Department appearance yesterday, about he who compromises with terrorists today will be terrorized by the terrorists tomorrow, which he thought was a good line and had bite, and wants Rogers to look for that kind of thing. On IRS, he wants



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the Senate-- or some Senator or Congressman to ask for a full field IRS check on all members of the House and Senate, plus White House staff and Cabinet on a yearly basis.

He got into-- he said this morning he wanted to have a schedule review this afternoon on plans for going out to the country and meeting with the Congress and so on. Sort out everything, find different ways to get across our message, and determine what our purpose is in going to the country, what does it do? Change the polls? Get mail to the Congress? Or what? And told me to be ready for a meeting on that this afternoon. He wants Ehrlichman to put special attention on developing a good agenda for the Leaders meeting, thinks that's a better use of his time, for the big bullet, than the things he's doing.

Called Timmons in today and raised the question of whether he ought to see the freshmen group in Congress that were fighting for him today. Agreed to do so. He's going to see them at 5:00 tomorrow and shifted McClellan to a breakfast tomorrow morning. Said again that the road show idea doesn't appeal to him, and wants some new recommendations.

This afternoon he had me go over the schedule meeting, but got into some other things first. Wanted me to give Manalo and Fina a modest raise in pay and also said that Rose had mentioned to Bebe that she hadn't had a pay raise in all the time that she had been here. He thought that giving her a pay raise would help the morale thing there. I recommended against it but said that I would be glad to do it. He wanted me to call Risner and Denton, the two POW leaders, and get a reading from them on when the President should have a POW event, and also tell them that the President would like to chat with them off the record some time when they can be in Washington. He commented that the VFW award kids who came in just looked terrible. He thought that they were probably bare-footed, were wearing jeans and awful-looking clothes, and he doesn't think we should allow that. On the stag dinners, he thinks they're good do for pro groups and that we should do more of them, because they're much easier for him than a mixed dinner.



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Getting into the schedule he wants to have a formal arrival ceremony for Thieu at El Toro, and then have him stay at San Clemente, no ceremonies at the compound. He said to schedule this Friday until 4:30. And then he'll go to Camp David and he can see someone up there on Saturday morning. And he has to come back down Sunday morning for the church service. Wanted Rogers added to the Cabinet agenda to cover aid to Vietnam. Then we talked some about the *Kennedy's 13 Great Mistakes* book, wants me to find Malcolm Smith, find out what he really did and what happened on the book. We covered a number of the other schedule items and philosophy, then he had to leave to get ready for the dinner.

The dinner tonight, which I attended, went very well. The President gave a good wrap-up talk on the overall world situation and ended by reading the Denton letter, which, of course, overwhelmed everybody. He had done the same thing last night. The evening was extremely effective and very impressive to those who were there.

End of March 7.