



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

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

Wednesday, April 4.

The President had no schedule today. He had me in first thing this morning when he came over at 9:00 for a long discussion on scheduling. He feels that Ehrlichman doesn't have the right idea regarding the President's approach that you have to hit the right notes. And for example, in the first three months, we've gone all-out on our system of inside things which are maybe important, but are useless except for spending maybe a half hour a day on them. That is, the sort of therapy-type sessions, which he feels we have to do in a ruthless way, as we're trying to do with foreign ministers, and so on. He has to do enough internal things to make the job work well, for example, the Cabinet we have to do every other week on a substantive basis, but the White House staff is not worthwhile unless there's a substantive need, such as a full day review of economic policy or something. NSC should meet when it's needed. At the Cabinet we should bring some sub-Cabinet people in, Ehrlichman's the key on this. He should set up some dog and pony shows. On the White House staff, they should only meet when needed, except that Ash ought to be in once a week.

Regarding foreign visitors, there should be no exceptions to the rule of no one but head of state or government, with the exception of the Soviets and the Chinese. On Congressional, we should meet with the leaders of one group or another. On the diddly stuff, rule out White House people, concentrate on Congressional. On outside groups, Mayors and etcetera, we should do some, for example, labor. Get others in just for pictures, but they must be totally analyzed. Ziegler and Steve should work out the photo opportunities carefully. On phone calls, he agreed to have a folder on the mac table with five or six calls in it, and try to make them from time to time, although he's not sure that's a good idea. On State Visits, he wants to start doing TV after dinner, look for ways to televise things. On going to the country, he doesn't really believe it's useful to show the President working on domestic problems as John feels. What is useful is seeing the President as President, ceremonial foreign policy, warm stuff like the Ford dinner. So in the country, we should go for ceremonial dedications, and so on. Get the President on television, not



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wearing horns. He raised the question of support mail to the Senators that voted with us on the veto, and letters to the anti-Republicans, blasting them for not standing with the President.

Wants Al Cole, Holt, Louis and so on to get going on getting Weicker. Thinks Goldwater should say that Weicker should disqualify himself like a judge who he has a prejudice in advance. Got into a discussion of press conferences and what he had to do on that. Feels that he can't go on a press conference until we go forward on some statement on Watergate or until the President knows what we're going to say. Especially regarding staff appearances. He thinks that 7:00 or 7:30 press conference time on live television is best, but wants to check the question of local option time. And no prime time press conferences unless there's a major event. For prime time, do an anchor and tech thing twice a year. Wants to be sure Kissinger knows there's to be absolutely no more departure statements or return lunches or dinners, and then got into a discussion about not telling Ziegler that he was going to go for a drive today.

He then had Ehrlichman in for some general discussion on Watergate. By then it was about 10:40 and we talked for a little while going over my concerns and so on. And then I went out so he could have a further discussion with John. I went back in to give him Dean's report.

John had called me on the phone to say that his lawyers saw the US Attorneys, Silbert and Glazer, and just sat and listened to take their temperature as representatives of Dean, regarding what would happen to him with the grand jury. He finds that first, he will be called, probably next week, the same as Mitchell. Same basis no cameras, and not announced until afterwards. Second, Dean is not a target for the grand jury, also Haldeman is not. They don't believe they'll have to call Haldeman, except possibly to corroborate other statements. Third, Liddy has talked to the US Attorney. His lawyer doesn't know it. They believe him—the US Attorneys do. And in his discussions he's freed the White House from their minds, although John doesn't know what he said.

Dean's lawyers have told him he must not talk to Jeb, and this morning Jeb called him. Dean's lawyers talked to Jeb's lawyer to try and untangle this. Fourth, they discussed the business on



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privilege and so on. Dean, according to the US Attorneys this morning, can't take the Fifth Amendment. His lawyers say he may have to on technicals. US Attorneys say they won't pursue that. Dean's lawyers think that in effect it'll be a practical immunity granted regarding after-the-fact technical violations.

He says there's a funny position regarding the grand jury minutes to the Ervin Committee that Sirica has ordered. The Justice attorneys have filed an amicus brief with Sirica regarding some rule that the grand jury minutes are secret. This would violate that, and Ervin, of course, has withdrawn the request for the minutes, so the government is in a good position regarding not releasing the grand jury minutes, John feels. Dean's view regarding Ervin appearances is that some arrangement has to be made on ground rules so that we talk only about first-hand knowledge, no hearsay. Regarding Dean, he thinks we should hard-line it and have no appearance at all.

He says Mitchell called Dick Moore, who was in Dean's office with Clawson, and they put Dean on the phone, too. Mitchell called to report that he had talked to F. Lee Bailey, and Alch had told him that when McCord was going to go before Judge Ritchie on the civil case deposition, he had a letter that he was going to file saying that Parkinson had handled the payoffs to the defendants via Mrs. Hunt. He told his lawyers that this was a lie, but that he had would-- wanted to get Parkinson somehow, and this was the best way to do it. He and Fensterwald cooked this up. Mitchell thinks we ought to find a way to get this out. Dean still thinks Jeb is the most serious problem, but his lawyers are working with Bierbower, Jeb's lawyer.

I reported all this to the President and John and then went out. The President and John finished up about 12:15 and called me in again. Discussed Magruder and the problem of what he would do if he was given immunity. Which I said I thought it would be very serious, and the question was raised of whether Strachan would tell Magruder to hire Liddy, something that we-- to rehire Liddy something we need to return to. In the discussion with the President and John while I was in there, we got into the point that the Weicker attack is a thematic approach that we've got to



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contend with. We should hit the press criticizing us, because we didn't campaign as a defense thing there. Reinforce the Presidency was our campaign concept, and it's ironic that we would be brought through the mud because of ill-advised people, since we had taken such a high-level approach, and I should condemn any excesses that took place. The most vicious campaign of libel and slander against the President, as was pointed out by William White or someone. The President has to use the Haldeman appearance to defend the campaign-- Correction: the President says, "We must use Haldeman's appearance to defend the campaign, as mentioned above." He then told John that he is to understand the overriding need for Haldeman on the staff. The President said, "Haldeman is more important to me than Adams was to Eisenhower. For example, the Kissinger situation, which only he can handle. I can handle the rest, probably, but I can't do that. So protecting Haldeman, in terms of whether his testimony is raising a greater doubt about him, is a major consideration. He is the President's closest confidante, his Chief of Staff, and we can't let him be tarred as a dirty SOB, and this is a case in point."

He also said that Ehrlichman needed to talk very soon with Colson. O'Brien should talk with Magruder, and Moore should talk with Mitchell. Maintain our contacts there, and be sure we don't get loused up on the basis of just not keeping them posted or keeping in touch with them.

Ehrlichman, Ziegler, Higby, and I then spent the rest of the afternoon going over a Q&A session to work out what might develop in my interview. It didn't work out very satisfactorily, and we're back to a general discussion of how we should approach this at this point. My feeling is that we have more problems than solutions and that we've got to really consider the desirability of my going. I'm not sure it would be productive.

End of April 4.