



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

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Monday, November 2.

TV night - and a real disaster! There was a terrible audio problem on the tape of Phoenix and we didn't know how bad it was until the first network, NBC, went on the air. We had bought all three. Complaints poured in, including to the President. After all kinds of checking, we could only conclude we had laid a bomb. Also our purchase gave Muskie three quarter hour shots. His production was very good, but the content and delivery pretty bad. I think we really came off with a net plus - but not what it should have been. When the real facts were apparent, President was very calm and understanding - although he had been cranking pretty hard at first.

Considerable division of opinion within staff regarding net effect - I think most feel it was bad, some think a disaster. The hard liners still feel it was good. But the whole mess points up the necessity of checking and re-checking on all these things. We certainly would have been better off to have done nothing - and then Muskie, too, would have done nothing.

At Chotiner's urging, President decided at last minute to zip over to Riverside to visit his aunt and - coincidentally, take a little attention away from a Tunney rally there.