



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

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Saturday, March 20.

The President's at Camp David. Coast is still clear nobody's caught up with him yet at least. He was very much interested in the report on the reaction to the Vice President's dinner last night with John Connally and the Cabinet, and I got one from Rumsfeld and reported it back to him. Don said that it had gone very well. It was a relaxed, friendly kind of meeting, with a knitted feeling that the Cabinet was much groupier than they have been before, and it was a very different-- a very different kind of meeting from those they've had in the past. He said it started a little as a bitching session, but shifted to the positive, and compared to previous gatherings, was definitely the best. He said Connally was much shorter than at the staff dinner and didn't lecture them as much, but they all got the point without question. Romney and Hardin and Rogers picked up the theme and carried it on very well.

Don said the introduction was very skillfully done by the Vice President, as he led into Connally's remarks and set him up very well for it. They also got into quite a discussion of the election, Mitchell apparently leading into it, and with the conclusion that Joh-- Connally and Mitchell both think that Humphrey will be the nominee, but that if he stumbles or screws up his processes, that Teddy would be the one. Hodgson made the point that Scoop Jackson is stronger than most people think because of his very great labor strength; but Connally says that may be true, but the labor people like Hubert too, and he's the one that's going to get it. Morton, Hodgson, the Vice President, and Connally all seem to think Scoop Jackson would be the toughest candidate to beat. Rumsfeld and, certainly, I don't agree. We both think Teddy Kennedy would be worse, because he'd stir things up more. The President's inclined to agree with the evaluation that Hodgson-- that Jackson would be the toughest.

The President also had some reaction to items in the news today and wanted to be sure, particularly, that we were following up on the SST battle and were doing everything that we possibly could, and also, that he would do anything that would be worthwhile. Along the same line, he wanted to be sure we were following up with the blacks on the Whitney Young eulogy.



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Apparently, there were three blacks at the NAB reception last night, and all of them asked for copies of the eulogy, which of course, pleased the President. So he wants to be sure we get it out to all the black ministers, lawyers, doctors, insurance men, etcetera. Continued on the next tape. Both becau--

[End of tape reel AC-05(B)]

[Beginning of tape reel AC-06(A)]

Continuing Saturday March 20. The President also raised the question of the need to really ride herd on the plans for Tricia's wedding and the handling of the events leading up to it. He wants to be sure that we take a hard look at everything. He feels Connie Stuart is too emotional to handle this adequately. A lot of people will be interested in what's going on, and that we need to get the decisions second-guessed, and the President wants to have a look at them. So he's asked me to set up a system to make sure that things get in to us before decisions are made, so that we have control, ostensibly in the President's name. So we'll set that up.

Apparently, his Camp David caper is working out okay, and he seems to be in good spirits, although he is calling from time to time on little odds and ends, like the above. End of-- He called again later, apparently following up on a conversation with Scoop Jackson and perhaps some others, regarding his interest in being sure we go all out on the SST vote, which comes up in the Senate on Wednesday and where we have a chance to regain the initiative after the House defeat last week. He wants to be sure we're making the all-out effort, that our count is worked out as carefully as possible, and that he be utilized to work on the four or five where he might be



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able to make the difference. He got a pretty good reading from Jackson on what is being done in general, and that, I think, got him sort of fired up on it.

End of March 20.