



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

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Tuesday, May 25.

Started out in Key Biscayne, then on to Alabama for stops in Memphis and Birmingham, then on into DC. I had no contact at all with the President during the day, except for a quick phone call in the morning before we left Key Biscayne, when he wanted to overrule the indication in the schedule that he would be riding in the bubble-top in the motorcade.

We had already changed it and put him into the Secret Service follow-up convertible, so that was no problem. We had great crowds in Memphis and Birmingham, and the trip went extremely well. It should have had some pretty substantial significance in terms of Southern strategy. George Wallace was with us all day, couldn't have been more friendly: stayed right with the President; got in every picture with him that he could; had Red Blount ride with him in his car, etcetera. There were no major problems or disasters.

In the media briefing in Birmingham, the President delivered a 55 minute talk on foreign policy, which according to Romney and others, was absolutely superb, although Ehrlichman was somewhat upset because it hadn't been on domestic policy. The President's feeling was that the other subject would have far greater interest with that audience.

He did call me at home on the phone after we got in tonight, mainly to change the dates on the Midway trip. He's talked to Henry, and because of the meeting with Sainteny in Paris and the unlikelihood of an answer before the 8th, or actually the impossibility of an answer before the 8th, we have to put the Thieu meeting off until after the 20th. So we'll work out a change for that. He also suggested we consider changing the press conference timing for now planned for Friday night, to move it until next Tuesday night. We'll have to check that out tomorrow.

He got into some items on trip evaluation. He was disturbed because Julie and David had a press conference without TV coverage planned, although it was added at the last minute. He does feel that this is the ideal way to go to these places, on a nonpolitical basis, except he wished we could go alone without Cabinet officers, Governors, and so forth. He talked about all of his various



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remarks and the effects they would have in Alabama. He felt he had covered the ground well on desegregation, etcetera. He made the point of the hypocrites of the North, and that got a wide play. He was somewhat concerned that we didn't have the real media power of the South at the briefing that he didn't see the people he would have expected at such a thing. And he was concerned because the State Chairman brought only the top 12 contributors out to the airport, rather than the real political power of the state; so we've got to juggle that kind of thing around. Overall, though, it was a very good day.

End of May 25.