



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

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Wednesday, October 20th. The President started the day this morning by calling Malek and me in to ask whether any of our recent high-level women appointees are lawyers, and if so, how many years they have practiced, and so on. This obviously relating to his decision on the two Supreme Court appointments.

Later in the morning, Ziegler came in for guidance on how to handle Court questions in the briefing. The principal question being whether the appointments would be this week. The President told him to answer that the AG has submitted the names for the advice of the ABA, that their recommendations will be considered but they will not be final, and the nominations will be coming forward in due course. For guidance, he told Ron that we may make it this week but he's not sure. And he said that he could use the point that the ABA is meeting later than we thought they would on the, to review the recommendations. He told Ron to say that, in fairness, he should remind them that the President said not to speculate, and that the stories regarding only six candidates were erroneous, and he told Ron to play it loose. He also told him to use a phrase regarding the ABA, on the point that after the experience that we've had on this nomination, we're not going to have nominees in the future pilloried by the press without having his side adequately presented first, so we will not submit future names to the ABA.

The President made several allusions during the day to the plans for nominations, but never said anything specific and made the point that he wasn't going to tell anybody this time, which apparently also includes me. Late this afternoon, he called to say, rather triumphantly, that he'll announce both nominations tomorrow night at 7:30. He wants Ziegler to make that announcement to the press immediately. I called Ron and told him so, and he felt that he wanted to hold up until tomorrow, because he's got the press thoroughly confused on the thing now, and he wants to let that story run tomorrow, and then, at the 11:00 briefing tomorrow morning, say



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that the President will go on television tomorrow night. I told Ron to go over and talk to the President about that, and he did, and the President agreed to the change.

The President then called me again to say that he needed a fast writer to help on his text for tomorrow night, so should we, so, so, so should enlist Safire. He said he wouldn't tell him tonight who the nominees would be, he could get started on that tomorrow. But in the meantime, the line would be of the vital importance of the Court, the effect the Court has, that there were many good people recommended, the two I've chosen are the best qualified, etcetera. He seems to be pretty pleased about the nominations. I think he's going for people who have not been on the list of six that was submitted to the ABA and probably who have not been speculated much about. My own guess would be that it would be the fellow from Virginia who is the former head of the American Bar Association, I can't remember his name, and Howard Baker, although I think it might well be one of those two plus Mulligan from New York. The theory on the woman is that the ABA is not going to approve her, and therefore, he'll let her pass and blame them for it.

We also had a discussion on the Secretary of Agriculture appointment. The Malek staff recommendation being Senator Bellman, with Earl Butz as second choice. His crew all rule out Louie Nunn completely. The President, at first, at first glance, ruled out Bellman and said to take Butz. Then the more he got to thinking about it and listened to the argument on it, he decided to talk to Harlow. He called him and ended up buying Bryce's argument that Butz is a Benson symbol and that the President's question on Bellman, whether he understands the intricacies, is not a problem—Harlow assures him that he does. So he told me to try to sell Mitchell on Bellman. I called John, and he doesn't buy him at all. He's still holding out for Louie Nunn.



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We got into the problem of Bill Rogers's feeling that he should take a trip to Moscow to set up the President's trip in the same way that Henry, that Henry's doing in Peking. The President is adamant that he is not to do this. He talked to me first...

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...and said I, we should try to find a way for Bill to go to Russia, but not to advance the President's trip. Maybe have him go with Stans on an economic mission, for instance. But in any event, we've got to anticipate the problem and pull it out in advance.

A little later in the morning, he had Haig in to talk about this, and made the suggestion. Stan, or Haig shot it down on the basis that Bill's pushing for a European Security Conference and would take this opportunity to maneuver on that, which would be very bad. The President bought that. They agreed instead that we'd have Rogers go to Europe, work on the Four-Powers, and maybe the other European allies as a preliminary to the Russia trip, get them properly briefed etc., and also, they're going to have him go to work right away on Latin America setting up a Latin American summit meeting probably in Brasilia in December. The President feels this will divert him sufficiently, but I'm not sure it will.

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He told me to talk to Rogers and also make the pitch that the Secretary of State should not go because it isn't the right, to Moscow, it isn't the right thing to do. We have diplomatic relations with them, and we should handle the setup through the channels, and it would not be the right



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way to posture Bill. We talked also a little about China plans, and the President wanted me to be sure to have Haig remind Henry that the President must see Chou En-lai and Mao alone, separately, without Kissinger, because he has done this with all other heads of state. He wants at least one meeting with each of them with only interpreters present, and these are to be in addition to all other meetings. We must have them on some occasion. He makes the point that not only do we need to do it because of the other countries, but so as to make it clear that Henry isn't manipulating the entire operation, but rather the President is clearly in command.

End of October 20th.