



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

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Tuesday, October 17.

Haig was in first thing this morning with a report from Henry who says the talks are going well and he feels that he should go on to Saigon, so he will tonight. We got into some discussions about Henry's attitude, along the same lines that Haig had expressed to me yesterday. He shares the President's view that Henry is strongly motivated in all this by a desire for personally being the one to bring about the final peace settlement. Al feels this poses a major problem in that it will cause Henry to push harder for a settlement and to accept a less favorable thing than he might if he didn't have this push. He thinks that my talk with him about a successor for Haig in the second term was very helpful, in that it gave him some reassurance that he would be around in the second term, and, therefore, the pressure for him to get this settled before the election was lightened and his willingness to talk it over with Haig was greatly increased. Al urges that while Henry is gone we give every possible evidence to him that we can, of total support so that he won't feel that he has to prove anything. He agrees that under no circumstances can he go to the third stop unless the whole thing is fully settled, but he's not at all convinced that Henry fully shares this view.

The President spoke this morning to a group of foreign labor leaders. Felt afterwards that he'd given a very thoughtful analysis of the relationship of labor and government and the history of free labor in the United States but that probably no one would notice it, that we wouldn't get any mileage out of it.

We had a one hour Connally meeting today, a lot of talk about how great his television show was, some discussion of funds to run it, a little discussion of Connally's schedule, some of Connally's ideas on the problem of the espionage/sabotage case and some speech ideas.

Then Mitchell, MacGregor and Ehrlichman joined us for the regular Tuesday political meeting. The President got into an analysis that as of now the polls are the same as they've been. In the next week to ten days the opposition has to break through but there's no way they can, especially if we keep on the offensive and keep them on the defensive. Some discussion on the radio



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speeches, Connally told him he feels that he's the most effective radio speaker in his lifetime. He then got into a question of the President's schedule. MacGregor raised it, feeling that we need some additional schedule activity in order to maintain the morale of our troops and to avoid the charge that we're taking the election for granted. Connally agreed, said the President ought to hit about eight cities in two days on ten minute airport stops in each, or consider traveling around the country the week after the election thanking people. The President basically didn't buy that argument because he feels that a stop in a state doesn't help the vote there and some of the states that Clark had suggested, he totally disagreed with. He feels he should not go back to Michigan because it'll only stir up the Ruther machine, Missouri's bad because of Eagleton, and that our problem is to avoid stirring up the opposition. Even going to Chicago is bad because of stirring Daley up.

The key here is to show emotion and Ehrlichman suggested a national get out the vote drive. The President would go to eight states with predicted low votes to make the case that they should get a better turnout. Actually, we'd select states where we're in good shape. Connally argued that the President should only do this if he really wants to but we do need to appear that we're not taking it for granted and he also argues that going out more would help with Congress after the election which is not a valid point. The President said we'll see Operation Rescue in the next three weeks as the Democrats try to save local candidates. His going out to campaign might aggravate this because any appearance he makes has to be political. It's a tough judgment call and questioned whether with television it's a good idea.

The basic problem is the dead spot next week between Monday and Saturday. The President talked about popping out and back from here, one stop each day on Wednesday and Thursday, but the problem then would be to have a major speech. So it got back to the airport prop stops. Then I suggested helicopter stops in tri-state areas, going to one tri-state airport and chopper to three states from there and then back to Washington. The President liked that and so did the others, and we ended up talking about Wednesday and Thursday of next week, and Monday and Tuesday of the following week for this kind of activity.



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Connally made a pitch that there was no question that he could win the election as a celluloid candidate but you get a very fragile strength through television, that you really have to be out where they can touch you. That he should go out not as a challenger, a campaigner, but as President, and not campaign against McGovern.

After the meeting, President made the point to me that he was very much concerned about their sensitivity on his time at Camp David. He said on the travel thing he tends to agree-- not on a rational basis-- but for the compelling reason that all of them seem so strongly for it. He thinks going out to the country is not bad if he can go in a dignified, non-combative way, as my helicopter plan would provide. He thinks we don't need it, that it won't affect the election. But that we have to live with the morale of our own forces, and that it does remove the Congressional arguments, so he suggested several combination states to work out of. To look for nonpolitical events that we could do if possible, preempting the VP or the family if we need to. He told me to go ahead and work some ideas out on this, which we'll get into I'm sure tomorrow.

End of October 17.