



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

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Tuesday, August 10th. The President started out the day with a little discussion with Henry and me on the defense budget, just prior to his meeting with the JCS on that subject, and then on Thursday the NSC, and Friday, the Service Secretaries. He hit Henry on the fact that we have the same problem that we had before, there's still no reorganization within the services and no strategic concept.

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They still plan to maintain all their bomber wings to intercept the Soviet bombers when they come over the pole, which they never will do.

And to divide up the serv--, the Defense dollar three ways between the three services. I think he's about given up on Henry getting that particular problem untangled.

Another general comment, he mentioned that he wants to get Connie Stuart out. That we need to get someone in with Mrs. Nixon whom she has confidence in and that relationship doesn't work out.

He commented on New Hampshire, that the crowd sizes become irrelevant, the problem is the adjectives that are used. For instance, in reporting by the commentators on McGovern and Bayh at the Democratic meeting, they all slobbered all over them and made their thing with three



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hundred people sound as good as ours with thirty thousand. Whether we get a good crowd report doesn't matter. The question is the adjectives and the description that give people the impression of what happens.

He also commented that the Vice President now seems to be overreacting to the press coverage of his trip. He shouldn't have said to the press, as he did, that it was the most successful trip he's taken, because it clearly wasn't.

He had an hour with Tom Shepherd, the publisher of *Look*, this afternoon, as a result of the President's favorable reaction to Shepherd's comments in his most recent speech where he blasts the environmentalists and the consumerists. The President expounded at considerable length on his theory of the leadership class decadence in this country, and Shepherd, of course, responded very strongly to that whole point.

Then this evening, we went on a dinner cruise on the Sequoia with Billy Graham. The President also had Mitchell, Kissinger, Ehrlichman, Rumsfeld, and Dent. The President and Graham dominated the conversation, Graham reporting at considerable length on the great success of his crusade in Oakland, particularly in interesting the college youth from Berkeley. He expanded on that to say that he feels very strongly that this turning to Jesus and religion amongst the college-age youth is a very strong phenomenon that is growing and will become a very powerful and important factor—politically and otherwise. He feels that youth have felt let down by everything they've tried, right on through the hard drugs, and that religion is the one thing they can find that gives them an answer, and that it is meeting a need and, therefore, is going to continue to grow.



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The President went into considerable detail on his leadership decadence theory at dinner, making the point that our real problem in this country is not the youth, not the hippies, not the people that have fallen away, but rather our leadership class. The ministers except for the Billy Graham-type fundamentalists, the college professors and other teachers, except for the old line great teachers, the business leadership class, etcetera. Where he feels that they have all really let down and become soft, and that that is where our problem lies, that we need to turn that to a position of strength. Graham agreed with him, but expanded that what this country needs from the President is a very strong challenge, rather than the government giving them everything. In other words, that he should hold forth a call to the people that taxes them and requires them to sacrifice and work, such as Kennedy did rhetorically, but never did substantively. He feels that, plus a recognition of the importance of the spiritual side of things and the growing interest in spirituality, would be extremely effective and popular. Graham also expanded on his firm belief that it was absolutely imperative that the President be reelected next year, or there wouldn't be any hope for him, and his movement, or for the country. The President had Henry expound a little on his point of the need for our being number one and taking a firm position of leadership. The President is expanding this point quite strongly in private conversations, and I think he's probably leading to a major public statement on it at some point in time.

End of August 10th.