

Haldeman Writes That Nixon Never Had Problem Handling Liquor

MISSION, Kan., June 20 (UPI)—Although Richard M. Nixon enjoyed an occasional drink and often appeared to be drunk late at night, the former President never had a drinking problem, his White House chief of staff, H. R. Haldeman, says.

"In all the thousands of hours I spent with Richard Nixon during an association of more than 16 years, all over the world, under all conditions and circumstances and in times of great elation and deep depression, I never saw any indication of a so-called 'drinking problem,'" Mr. Haldeman writes in the second of a five-part series of newspaper articles to be published tomorrow. The series is being distributed by Universal Press Syndicate, based in a suburb of Kansas City.

Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, the reporters, in their book "The Final Days," hinted that Mr. Nixon was drinking heavily just before his resignation.

Mr. Haldeman says his chief would have a couple of drinks

before dinner sometimes, usually on weekends, and frequently had wine with his dinner.

"But he never appeared to me to have a problem handling liquor, or depending on it to function in his capacity as President," he says.

Mr. Haldeman, who resigned in 1973 and later was convicted in the Watergate cover-up, gives an example from the 1968 Presidential campaign when Mr. Nixon appeared to be drunk but had only had a half-bottle of beer.

Same Pattern Often

"I observed the same pattern often before and in subsequent years of our association," he says. "When Nixon was tired and unwinding, he often had a bottle of beer before going to bed. Sometimes he took a sleeping pill, especially if he had a lot on his mind and was tense. This combination of exhaustion and beer tended to produce the groggy look and the slurred talk one usually associates with intoxication.

"It may have had something to do with Nixon's metabolism. But that night, as on many similar occasions around the country at a late hour, the process was repeated."

The article describes the relationship between the two as business-like, and Mr. Haldeman denies that he worked to isolate Mr. Nixon in the Oval Office.

In the first article, published today, Mr. Haldeman says he believes Mr. Nixon made a "tragic mistake" just before his resignation by failing to grant blanket pardons for every person connected with the Watergate scandal and all Vietnam draft evaders.

He also says Mr. Nixon and his top aides mishandled the Watergate case from the outset because they were afraid the investigation would lead to top Administration officials.

Mr. Haldeman, who is appealing his two-and-a-half-to-eight-year sentence in the Watergate case, writes that he urged Mr. Nixon to issue the pardons for Watergate defend-

ants and draft evaders in a telephone conversation Aug. 7, 1974, one day before the President announced to the nation that he was leaving the White House because of Watergate. He says Mr. Nixon called him in Newport Beach, Calif., to tell him he had decided to resign.

"If you're going to leave office," I told Nixon, you should take all the traumas of Watergate and Vietnam with you, and all the others involved that the blanket pardons I recommended were not given."

"I think it was a tragic mistake for the political good of the nation as well as for myself and all the others involved that the blanket pardons I recommended were not given."

Disney Water Rides Open

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla., June 20 (UPI) — President Ford's daughter Susan plumped down a 260-foot water flume today to open River Country, a new attraction at Walt Disney World. River Country covers five acres and features water slides, flumes, swings and raft rides.

Trees, Lakes, Green Grass. The Fresh Air Fund

The Fresh Air Fund is a national organization that provides fresh air and recreation for children in inner-city areas. It is currently raising funds for a new program in the New York City area.