



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

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Friday, November 12.

The question came up at the staff meeting this morning of the problem of the expiration of the spending authority on Monday night at midnight, and our problem is we have no continuing resolution because Ellender is sitting on it. He wants to keep the pressure on, and the question now is whether Weinberger should have a press conference to urge action. The danger is that this would get Ellender's back up, but there's considerable discussion of the strategy on how we approach that.

Another major item was concern regarding a worldwide recession, which is rampant in the financial community now because of our tough policies and international economic policy. McCracken feels this concern is probably overdone but that there is a general-- and that there is a general expansion in the key countries. Then he admits, though, that the Japanese have a reduced rate of growth, that Italy has an actual decline in growth and Germany does have some problems, too, but most of them have shifted their policies in an expansionary direction. He thinks that anything the U.S. government can do to resolve the hiatus would be enormously beneficial, both here and in the rest of the world, and he makes the point of the problem with the Italian elections, where we'll get the blame regardless of the actual cause.

President spent all morning preparing for his Vietnam announcement press conference this afternoon, and didn't seem to have any particular problems in getting ready. He did a superb job at the press conference. I think it was probably one of the best ones he's ever had. He used the press room and was on film for the entire conference, opening with the Vietnam announcement and then taking questions for half an hour. He had Kissinger, MacGregor, and me in afterwards and told MacGregor to play down any tendency to extend the withdrawal figures past the two month period. Makes the point that we have to keep the clout for the POW's, and that, that he should get the Congressional people not to push the President for a final announcement.

He also in the press conference, they asked if he would consider amnesty for the draft dodgers who had gone to Canada and he answered with a simple "no." And talking about it afterwards,



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said that the line there is that serving in Vietnam is a difficult problem for young Americans, but 2.5 million chose to serve and 45,000 of those who chose to serve died for their country. On the other hand, a few hundred chose to desert their country, and they have to live with their choice.

Transcript of the press conference is well worth reviewing, because the content was excellent, as was his attitude and style. He left shortly after the press conference for Camp David and although-- no, he had an NSC meeting after the press conference and then after that left for Camp David for dinner and the weekend. He was very much interested in the network follow-up on the press conference, and it came out very well—since they all carried very good, lengthy footage—and that proved to him that that technique is worthwhile.

End of November 12.