



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

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Tuesday, January 13.

Another day supposedly cleared for work on State of the Union, but no work done. Came in late, had worked last night until about 1:00. Called me in for an hour session (interrupting an Oberdorfer interview) to run through a long list of items. Then a series of appointments, to swear in Weinberger, accept a coaches' award, etc. Then with Harlow and Ehrlichman about HEW veto. Question of whether he'll back off - problem is we're setting all the wheels in motion for a battle to sustain the veto. Hard to explain if he shifts position.

Cabinet in executive session this afternoon for three hours twenty minutes. Apparently didn't do too much regarding budget - but must have covered something in all that time. President met in office, after the meeting, with Shultz, Laird, Mayo, Harlow and Ehrlichman for another hour, then shot out for home. Called me to say he'll have to work tomorrow on budget, didn't get things settled today, but doesn't want anything set up. Had originally planned to go to Camp David tonight to start on speech. Now says he'll have to stick with budget and may not get to speech until end of week.

I think this is a classic example of forced procrastination. The draft he has is totally unsatisfactory - too spongy, blah, too long, etc., and he dreads getting started to work on it, so keeps inventing excuses. Will have to get at it pretty quick and he knows it, so I will bet on Camp David tomorrow afternoon - stay until Saturday and that he'll waste a couple of days, then get it pretty well started. This will mean a rough week next week as he tries to wrap it up. But we have everything clear so he can do it.

Ehrlichman is really loaded with both budget and speech responsibilities, and apparently the Cabinet meeting stirred up even more. He has done great job of spreading out his responsibilities to his new staff, and he floats from one meeting to another and seems to keep it all covered. Great knack.