



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

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Tuesday, February 24.

Pompidou. Good arrival ceremony, extra fanfare and larger crowds laid on to compensate for snubs, etc. expected elsewhere. President very anxious to do all we can. Usual morning talks, and State Dinner tonight - I didn't go.

Back to Helene this morning – President found she talked to Pat Nixon and is convinced she wants to come for a visit. Now wants Christina to try and work it out with Jack. Also back on speech writer need, because stuff for tonight not adequate.

Good busy afternoon of appointments - including meeting with Rogers to report on his African trip. Kissinger scared to death he wouldn't be asked to sit in and afraid to ask for fear of turndown. All worked out fine. Then had me in for another long one at 5:45.

Main subject was introspective rumination regarding his role and use of his time. Said had done a lot of thinking over the weekend regarding his three classic roles - leader of Party; Chief of State; head of government. Said Party leader really part of head of government. So question is time spent being king versus being leader. Has tried to look at overall picture last year to see what percentage went to each.

Feels we have to get to cold tough decisions - maybe should consider a drastic shift - and reduce the king time to a bare minimum. Also points out have to take some time just to be a nice person. Wants to have more concentration on thinking deeply regarding the important decisions - and time to read and think - and to rest enough to be always in best physical condition.

Doesn't like relying so much on staff for major decisions - wants staff to do all minor ones, but feels he should get much more deeply into the major ones and know what he's doing. Says that's what he's really here for - plus to appoint top people to handle the rest.



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Also emphasized need to concentrate overall thinking regarding public stuff on TV - that's all that counts. Says he can't spend his time just signing his name and reading briefing papers someone else has prepared.

So, a lot of soul-searching that indicates an uneasy feeling that he's not really going at it the best way. I think he's right. Obviously need some of the king stuff to make the other effective. Main problem is how he'd use the time if it were made available. Right now he generally wastes it in trivia.