



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

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Wednesday, December 16.

Christmas tree lighting day. The President had no schedule to keep the day clear for preparation for the televised lighting of the National Christmas Tree at 5:30. He worked all day at the EOB, spending most of the morning on the remarks. He got those finished at around midday, at which time he had me come over. He went through general review. Didn't have anything particularly on his mind. A few notes left over from last night.

And then, I got into a report of my conversation yesterday with Cliff Miller, primarily on the subject of the need for an economic spokesman and a plan to get over the understanding that we do have a program on economic policy and that it is working, just as we have done so effectively on Vietnam. The President was very intrigued with the thesis and with the point that McCracken is not a good spokesman and, in fact, is counterproductive and that we don't have anyone else who is. He had me get Ehrlichman and Shultz over, which I did. We had quite a long discussion on this subject, which was very productive. Shultz recommended two possibilities. Steigler, who he had been pushing for the international economic post, and an Ezra Solomon at Stanford, who he says also would be an outstanding spokesman. The President told him to try to get both of them, one for the international job and the other to replace Houthakker on the Council of Economic Advisors.

The President made it very clear that he feels this need very strongly and recognizes that Connally will be very effective but is not a recognized expert in economics and, therefore, will not fully meet the need that we're talking about. Therefore, he wants Shultz to go to work on building a team for the road of Shultz, Steigler, Solomon, and Stein. As Ehrlichman noted on his pad, we'll have the jawboning of four S's.

The President also got into a discussion of the problem of a weak Cabinet and this being the real reason for bringing Connally in. That he had to have at least one really strong man in the Cabinet. He cited again, as he has frequently in other sessions, Nofziger's comment that there



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now isn't one man in the Cabinet who could be seriously considered as a Vice Presidential or Presidential candidate.

End of December 16.