



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

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Wednesday, December 30.

President spent the morning getting his annual physical checkup. Unfortunately, we blew the plan for Tkach to brief afterwards. He did the briefing, but Ron didn't really get over to him the point of getting out the line that the President needs to stop working so hard, so Walter, instead, gave a pretty straight medical report and this led to great concern on the President's part. That was compounded by his discovery that we had completely failed to get out the story of his meeting with the Boys' Town group yesterday, at which he apparently spent 10-15 minutes talking with the kids and answering some of their questions, explaining to them about bipartisan support in the Congress and the point of what a great place Boys' Town was, because outstanding boys like them had made it so. There was no one in the room at the time to record this. Nobody got any story out on it. This led the President back to the discussion last night with Connally, and the fact that we don't really get out the points that we should be getting.

I spent about three hours with him this afternoon after he got back from the physical, when he got into all of this. He talked with Rogers on the phone and agreed to meet with the Jewish group, so Bill brought them over a little later in the afternoon. He also talked to Meany, who wants him to support a wage board bill that they've gotten through Congress.

Then he got back onto checking on some of the odds and ends and mentioning some of Connally's other points, one of which was that Lincoln was the great figure of the 19th century and Churchill and de Gaulle were the two great figures of the 20th century; the big thing about all of them is their comeback from defeat, not their conduct of wars, etcetera. Connally feels we should very much build the comeback story.

He then had Colson in to review the Teddy Kennedy newspaper story again and was intrigued with the activity that's going on with that. Our other problem today was that Oberdorfer and, I guess, some of the others screwed up the story on the announcement of the plan for the TV conversation next week, and-- so the tone hasn't been set properly for that. We've got to try to untangle that.



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Also, the President decided, on the basis of an Alsop story in the paper today that leaked all of our plans for the State of the Union that we'd have to reevaluate the decision to drop the value-added tax idea. The President now thinks it's been leaked to so many people that we're going to have to put something in, at least for the purpose of sweetening the revenue sharing. He wanted Ehrlichman to develop a plan for one percent value-added tax, giving it all to the states to use for any purpose as a reduction in tax or an increase in general revenues. He thinks if we do just a small one we can get away with it. Ehrlichman totally disagrees and they had a long session this afternoon to discuss this.

Rose snuck in and conned the President into accepting her invitation to attend the Keogh going away party at Blair House tonight. The President spent several hours after that agonizing over it and was very distressed that he had to go, but couldn't figure out how to get out of it.

End of December 30.