



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

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Thursday, December 9th. Back on the OEO veto question again today as we got into a big flap on the veto message itself, since Price and Andrews had been working on it and Ray refused to get Buchanan into the operation on drafting. So the President last night told Ehrlichman he wanted Buchanan to do the draft, and Ehrlichman got that into motion. Apparently the thing they finally did use was Buchanan's draft, mixed by Buchanan in with the Price-Andrews draft. John says, Ehrlichman says there's a monumental problem also with Elliot, who is violently opposed to this. Told John he was going to have to have a press conference and separate himself from the Administration position, which John persuaded him would not be the right thing to do.

We had some discussion on the President's television plans, because CBS has now come up with a refusal to do the Julie Christmas show unless the President agreed to do a one-on-one. He told Ron he would agree to do one, since he's going to anyway, but will not commit a specific time. Said he would do it sometime in the first quarter of the year. He told me afterward his feeling was that it would be a good idea to do it before the State of the Union, but after the Vietnam announcement in January.

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The question came up of making some agreements with Medici, with whom the President met again today, on Cuba. Medici would like to stand firm on opposing admission of Cuba to the OAS, and if we will join with him



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I argued that this was a good public posture for us to take, because it would shore the conservatives up again if we took this sort of a firm thing. Henry also has a note from the Soviets on Pakistan, regarding a possible cease-fire agreement, and it looks as if things aren't all lost, as he thought they were yesterday. The President told him to develop a game plan as to where it is we want to end up and what we want to accomplish, and then to work that out. Henry then made an urgent pitch that the President see the Soviet Agriculture Minister who was here today, because he's a strong personal friend of Brezhnev's and has a message from Brezhnev, and also the President can give him a message back, laying it out very sternly. Henry also said, as Haig confirmed, that the President will have to meet with the WSAG this afternoon, because they're in open rebellion against Henry and the President's position, but that would depend on what position they've decided on at their noon meeting regarding the game plan. The President agreed to do this as he's sort of going along with Henry now and trying to get any problems resolved.

Haig came in to see me on this whole question. He agrees basically with the general conclusions that the President and I had come up with yesterday. That is that Henry is physically tired, that he does realize he's at fault in the failure in India-Pakistan to date, and doesn't like that feeling. Also Haig points out that Henry basically is bored. He's just tired of fighting the bureaucracy on all these things. But AI shares my belief that Henry isn't about to quit, no matter what kind of threats he makes. Even though this time he says he's deadly serious and claims he's going ahead with it. The President is resigned to our taking a hard line on this, and if Henry quits, he'll just have to quit. I personally think that's the only position he can take and that there's no great danger in it, because I don't think Henry has any intention of walking out before China, and the President won't let him make any announcement or intention to do it if he wants to go to China.

The President again went round and round in trying to analyze the problem, Henry's ego, his way of working, etcetera. It's very hard to pin down what specifically is wrong, and I believe Haig's



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right, as are we, in our analysis that it's a combination of a number of these factors. But I think my position with Henry of hitting him very hard on the fact that if he just, if he's going to announce he's leaving, then he's got to leave, whether it's now or next June or whatever. He can't announce now and then leave later, because it would leave him as a lame duck with no power influence or ability. Also I pushed him on the point that, if things are in such a bureaucratic mess, he obviously can't leave. He's got to get things untangled first and then leave. He can't just walk out leaving the President sitting with a disaster. He seemed to be in a much better mood today, and I think, as action is starting now, he's developing a plan and getting in to carrying things out, that he's much better.

Upon an unrelated matter the President apparently met with the Attorney General yesterday and agreed to pardon Hoffa, and had me call the AG today to say when he's talking to Loeb to tell him that we're not looking for Loeb's support that we just want nonsupport of Ashbrook or any other Republican. That we want him to stay with his support of Yorty, and leave it at that. And the President's real point is that he doesn't want Loeb to support him. He feels that he'd do more harm than good, but he also doesn't want his opposition in the primary.

End of December 9th.