



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

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Tuesday, February 6.

Got into David's problem again this morning. The President says that-- he called me in, and was quite upset. He says that David's captain had called him and treated him very rough, urged him to stay. That the Secretary of Navy had said it would look political if he got out, and that it's now gotten as high as Warner and something's got to be done about it. I then checked with Scowcroft who says that the captain rolled him last summer when he first applied, but his application went in anyway. It was verbally okayed by his detailer but not acted on, so he missed the December list. The question then was whether he should be added to it. That was raised with the Secretary of Navy, who said it would be best to put him on the next routine list, so that he wouldn't be getting special treatment. Thus, he's up for March 31 retirement. There has been no further pressure on it, but now he wants to serve until the ship goes into the yard. I then called David at Camp David, and he said that's true, that he has the 31 March release date, but he doesn't think it's a good time, and he's asked Campbell to check into postponing it until July. The President doesn't seem to be satisfied with this. I think the real problem is Julie pressuring him to get something done to get David out. The President said he talked with Julie and she and David have decided that they want to go to California, so he is now going to leave on Thursday at 3:00 and will stay out there until the 19th. Wants a light schedule. Wants to add a Cabinet meeting Thursday morning for breakfast, before he goes.

Then got into the question of our need to have a better feel as to how to present things, such as at the leadership meeting this morning. Scott requested that we have some of these key points written down on a piece of paper, and Ehrlichman told him it was all covered in the budget book, which misses the point. We've got to spell out the key points, the grabbers and so on. Ash was excellent and articulate, much better than Shultz, but he doesn't give them simple, grabby terms. You've got to give a guy a few lines that he can memorize.

He got into that again this evening, saying that we've got to prepare leadership meetings and that sort of thing better ahead. That Timmons is not a good emcee, because you can't tell him to hit



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this or that. There should be a meeting ahead to figure out the three or four lines that the leaders should have and then get those across.

We got into a flap on his radio speech for tomorrow, when Steve took it into him late this afternoon with no time for preparation, so he's not going to do it. He says he has to have a day to work on any speech, so he'll try to do that one on Thursday. He got into a lot of odds and ends on strategy. He wants Kissinger to keep Sonnenfeld in the NSC, because he's too good to lose. He says State Dinners are the worst thing of all to have to do. That he'll have no Mexican State Visits. That we still have a hole on the President's speeches, someone in charge of what he's going to say. Shultz and Burns, for example, are pushing for a talk on international monetary and trade and they'll want it on TV, which absolutely the President will not do. So it's got to be understood that all Presidential public presentations must come in through me. He says everybody's so busy on substance that the sparks don't come, which is why the Domestic Council is so dull. The charts don't get the message to the people. You have to just give them six or eight points. He made the point that he found the line for the prayer breakfast regarding the song from a letter that came to him and wonders why we can't get some more of this kind of thing out of the mail, which is a very good indication of what people are saying and in the way that they are saying it. He wants a poll on amnesty again. Be sure to word the question right to get a reading on where we stand there.

We then got into quite a long question and discussion of Henry's whole situation, making the point that he's made all the big plays now and is trying to look for ways to maintain the momentum, which is essentially impossible. There is no way to duplicate the year that has just been completed. That's what Henry is in effect trying to do, although he may not realize it. He feels he's running down and getting bored, and for that matter, so is the President. There's a real letdown and psychological depression after the type of accomplishments that they've had. Henry's obviously not interested in taking the time to work out the details of the agreement, etcetera, which must be done, but doesn't really interest him at this point. So we've got to watch this as he completes his trip and comes back. Especially he is reluctant to move into the Middle



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East, which the President feels has got to be settled now. Henry's pushing for a big European bang of some kind later in the year, with an all-European Summit of some sort, which the President's reluctant to move on, at least at this time.

End of February 6.