



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

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Monday, April 30.

Resignation day. We finished up our resignation statements this morning. And I had a meeting with Bull, Parker, Larry, and Kehrli to impress on them the need to carry on the ongoing system just as it is until a new system was worked out and ready to put into place, and urged that they not fall into the trap of any sort of internal struggle for position. And explained the importance of their holding everything tightly together during the interim period while the President would be in a very tough emotional and physical shape, and so on.

Ehrlichman and I then met with the senior staff. Shultz couldn't be there because he was testifying on the Hill, but we had Ash, and Kissinger, Timmons, and Ken Cole and told them what our decision was and made something of the same points. John was quite emotional in that session, broke down or was on the verge of it at least, several times. Everybody, I think, was genuinely shocked, and I think we successfully impressed on them also the need to deal very carefully with this interim period.

I made a number of phone calls, talked to Billy Graham. He seemed to feel it was the right thing to do, said that he didn't believe that in government he had met two finer men than Ehrlichman and me, that we have his full support, he feels we've been caught in a web of evil that will ultimately be defeated. He has great affection and love for me as a man, that I should count him as a friend, and that what I'm doing is going to help the President.

I called the Vice President, he said he had almost called me yesterday, wanted to let me know about the charges that came out then, that they were tremendously unfair, and that they were nothing but smoke. Said he'd like to see me before I actually left, that he would like to be as helpful as he can, and that he thinks this is probably the right move.

Talked to Connally, he says I think this is the right thing to do at this time, although I'm awfully sorry it came out that way. Then emphasized the great opportunity I would have to influence the



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President on who follows in my footsteps and in the staff restructuring. He emphasized the need to implore the President to get top people and go at the restructuring right.

The announcement plan hit a snag when Ehrlichman and Jerry Jones were unable to reach John Dean to inform him that the President was requesting his resignation, so there was a little flap at 11:00 about that, but Ron went ahead with the announcement anyway. The first lead out of it was rather unfortunate, because it implied that Dean, Ehrlichman, and I had all resigned. But Ron worked all afternoon and got that corrected, so by the time of the evening news, it came out that Ehrlichman and I had resigned, as had Kleindienst, and that Dean had been fired. There was no reaction from Dean all day.

President called in the afternoon from Camp David, where he was working on his speech for tonight. Sounded terrible, said, well, I just wanted you to know I still love you. Commented on the problem of reaching Dean, and said so be it. And said basically I have all resignations in hand anyway, don't I? And I said that he did. Told me to tell Ehrlichman that he was in the middle of the speech draft, but to tell him the same as he had told me, and also to tell him and he said you won't understand this, but John will, that I think he's a great man, and his wife is a great lady, and I won't let her down tonight. This was because Jeanne had written the President a letter which John left with him yesterday when we were up at Camp David.

John and I then spent the afternoon with our lawyers, going through the whole process of how to approach our appearances. President's TV speech tonight was, to say the least, not one of his finer efforts, but it probably was effective, because he was obviously shaken, and as the commentator said, didn't exhibit the normal confidence we associate with him. He's obviously in heavy weather, and so on. He sure showed that. It was interesting that he called-- I called him, and they said he wasn't taking calls, but he called back a little after 10:00. I said well, you've got it behind you now, and you should approach it that way. He said it was a very tough thing, and I'll never mention it again. Then he got to feeling sorry for himself. He said Cap is the only Cabinet officer who's called. I told him that the operators were telling people that you weren't



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taking calls. Said to me you're a strong man, you've got to keep the faith, you're going to win this, God bless you.

Then he asked me if I thought I could do some checking around on reaction to the speech as I had done in the past, and I said no, I didn't think I could. He realized that was the case. He called again about midnight, rather bitter. Said Kissinger's reaction is typical, he's waiting to see how it comes out. He said again, keep the faith, and that was that.

Earlier this evening, we'd gotten into something of a flap because Garment had met with Richardson and Ruckelshaus, and they had all decided that it was imperative that they put FBI guards on all of our files, so there couldn't be any charge that we had destroyed anything, destroyed any evidence and so on. Ehrlichman didn't like that, but we went round and round and it was agreed that they were just there as guards, not as custodians, and so they said they would do it on that basis.

End of April 30, and the end of my official career in the White House. Although technically I'll remain on the payroll for a while, I don't know exactly how long. The termination plans haven't been worked out, and we've got to get at that pretty soon, too. We'll stay on in some sort of fashion for a while, at least, to help in the transition, but obviously we're going to have to concentrate on the case from here on out, and the President's going to have to move on to new ways of doing business.

[End of April 30.]