



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

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Thursday, January 28.

The President extended the Congressional breakfast a little longer today. Each one seems to be longer than the one before. We had a pretty light day for him otherwise. The morning was basically clear, and he spent it just chatting in general with me. He called Senator Stennis to thank him for his remarks yesterday on Cambodia in defense of the Administration. Had quite a long talk outlining his Cambodia position and making it clear that we absolutely were committed to no ground troops but to full use of air as needed to knock out the rebuilding of the sanctuaries and protect American lives. He did a good job of confirming Administration intentions with Stennis and, apparently, it was a very satisfactory conversation. He later talked with Bill Rogers, who had spent the entire morning testifying before Foreign Relations. Rogers wants to have a press conference tomorrow to lay out publicly the position he laid out for the Senate today and clarify the whole Cambodian thing. The President thinks this is a good idea, although he had originally felt Kissinger should do a backgrounder to accomplish this instead.

In the late morning, the President agreed to let a group of twelve college student editors come over. This was a group that was visiting the State Department for the day under Mike Collins' Public Information Program. And the President greeted them in the Oval Office, then chatted with them a little there and had Ehrlichman give them a quick rundown on the revenue sharing and other domestic program points from the State of the Union. They were totally bored with that entire presentation, and the President, unfortunately, gave them a chance to ask a question. The bearded guy immediately jumped on Cambodia and the fact that we had troops in there. The President-- well first, Ehrlichman stepped in and corrected the guy who was using as his "facts" the CBS presentation last night, which claimed that we had men working on the ground in Cambodia. Ehrlichman jumped in and corrected the facts, then the President moved in and made a very clear and complete statement of our position on Cambodia. I don't think he convinced the students, but at least he covered his point with them.



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He spent most of the afternoon coming back to that session, because it clearly bothered him. I think that part of it may have been good, because it will make him think a little about the public information aspects of the actions we're taking in Cambodia.

Along similar lines, Mitchell has come up with a recommendation that we should call a Grand Jury for further investigation at Kent State. Bob Taft is strongly opposed to this, and the President wasn't quite sure what his view is but agreed with me that we should just let it lie where it is, that opening it doesn't do us any good. Also, J. Edgar Hoover has told him that the facts don't warrant a Grand Jury. He wants Ehrlichman to try to work this out.

We got into the usual run-through of items on follow-up with the State of the Union. And he seems to be reasonably well satisfied that that's now going okay. In the late afternoon, he had a meeting with the top executive group from ABC. He seemed to feel it had gone very well. They raised a number of questions of concern to them, and the President proposed his idea of the one-on-one series of interviews and said he'd like to start with Howard K. Smith. I'm sure this delighted them. We'll get a fuller report tomorrow on all that was covered.

Ehrlichman told him that Shultz was pretty tired and needed some rest. So the President had him in and told him to use Camp David this weekend and set him up for a week in the Bahamas after Washington's birthday. He spent quite a little time trying to convince George that he definitely should take this time off.

End of January 28.