



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

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Wednesday, March 19.

President had tried to start his "clear Wednesday" policy today, but we had to load in a batch of appointments this morning. Afternoon was clear. Then the Chowder and Marching dinner tonight. Because the report was pretty grim regarding DDE, President went, at last minute, to Walter Reed. Feels it was the last visit - and Tkach says he's about through. So we spent some staff time working out our whole action plan for the funeral, etc. - which I later reviewed with President.

Problem with giving the President free time is that he hauls me in for hours on end - about four total today. Lots of little details - and the two always present big ones - ABM and budget. Plans to hit the Cabinet hard tomorrow on budget - after Mayo's briefing, President will call executive session and really push for cuts. He's particularly bothered by Finch because he's apparently not cutting at all. Feels most of the others are at least trying.

Romney really stirred up - wants appointment, but President won't see him until his volunteer program is fully worked out. Poor Ehrlichman has to handle and George ain't easy. Is reaching the crisis stage, with threats of quitting, etc.

Long discussion about ABM battle plans. President feels we aren't really organized to push it through. Wants a complete plan. He's right!

Then on to need for a domestic program - the other of the week's big three problems. Ehrlichman promises the raw material for review on the plane to California, but I think we're a long ways from what President wants - i.e., a specific legislative program. According to Moynihan, this is neither feasible nor desirable - time now to consolidate, not to innovate. But Congress pressures (and the columnists) for action - and P reacts.

Another push regarding our inadequate attention to TV, especially news coverage. Wants 5:00 Group and others to concentrate on this. Wants others besides President to carry the word on TV. Wants TV built into the weekly game plan.



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Planning to take more time off, per the last advice from DDE. Hope he does it.