



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

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Monday, December 8.

Press Conference Day. President stayed at Camp David until 1:00. Called quite a few times regarding specifics, questions and arrangements for Farm Bureau. Went right to EOB on arrival at White House, and stayed there until 8:00 - except for the run to Hilton at 3:00. Was only gone from office thirty minutes total, but made a darn good ten minute speech to four thousand farmers and got a lot of mileage. Had Harlow work up remarks but didn't use any of his stuff. Obviously spent a little time preparing for it somewhere along the way.

Had some comments regarding the briefing material. Feels they all prepare answers for the writing press and ignore the basic point that all that really matters is an answer the TV viewer will understand. Must use their vernacular, and remember we're doing this for our benefit, not the press.

Called to have Buchanan dig out a Churchill quote - which he used - regarding always profited from criticism and has never been short of it. Also wanted the final AP and UPI football polls, because of flap over whether Texas is number one, big crisis at Penn State.

Said we need a new procedure for press conference preparation, to get things boiled down better. Need to avoid the great last day flood from everybody and to avoid the long background-type briefing papers. Feels Buchanan can do the boiling down but lacks the judgment as to what basic answer to give, so should use Harlow for judgment part.

Called me at home about 11:30 to recap. Said he'd had to do much more work on this one - because had so many answers, too much material. Was feeling very good, all reaction highly favorable. Even John Chancellor said it was good. President called him and asked him to get together with Severeid about how often President should have press conference; Chancellor said he disagreed with Edward P. Morgan's question on this point. President took twenty-seven questions, which is a new record, and had no fluffs except regarding 250,000 pagodas Marines had built in Vietnam.



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Another darn good performance, with no problems.