



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

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Friday, March 20.

Day kept clear for press conference preparation. But postal strike in New York is still on, and President got into some lengthy sessions with Ehrlichman on it. He spent whole day at EOB. President first reaction was for really tough stand - examine the law; if people can be fired, fire them; if troops can be moved, move them; want to do something now - this morning - not going to tolerate Federal employees strike. Says suspend them if we can't fire them - all out attack - not worried about the mail, it's the principle. Wanted Ehrlichman to get this all worked out and bring over an order for President to sign. Then got worried that Ehrlichman should be working on school statement instead - must have by 5:00 today, after press conference.

Later called over all upset because Kissinger making an issue out of State reluctance to bomb Laos. Rogers wanted a meeting, to argue President's decision. President told me to tell Kissinger to go ahead and bomb - don't make announcement or notify State, just do it and skip the argument. Kissinger in a bind because he's committed to Rogers to notify him before any strikes.

At midday, as President got better feel of seriousness and complexity of postal problem, he decided not to have the press conference today. Will probably do it tomorrow morning. In discussing items with Ziegler for briefing, President said "Hard nose it at the moment, we'll have some good news before long." Wants to be sure not to express concern, etc., regarding postal strike because that implies we're not in control, lack of leadership, etc.

President talked with Shultz on phone - said he'd do anything he wanted about meetings, statements, etc. He's anxious to get in command of the situation.

Spent the balance of the day working on briefing. I am still heavily involved in Murphy problem - lots of ideas, complicated by Norton Simon filing - Finch almost moved in, but decided not to.

He later decided to hold the school statement until next week partly because it's still not really ready, and because he'll do press conference tomorrow.



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Postal problem settled in late afternoon when union leaders agreed to get workers back in, then negotiate. At least Ehrlichman thinks this settles it. I doubt that leaders can get workers back, since it's a wildcat strike to begin with.