



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

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Monday, March 23.

Maybe an historic day. President ordered troops into New York to take over essential mail services. Started with a long early morning session in my office with Blount, Shultz and Ehrlichman, plus Klein and Ziegler. Went round and round on what to do, and all the possible consequences. Finally, inevitable that he use troops - Shultz was the last holdout, but finally agreed we had to do it.

Ehrlichman, Ziegler and I went over to EOB and told President. He fully agreed. Set time and plan for announcement on national TV, with top leaders meeting first. Got a statement prepared. Amazing how little leadership in the group - but finally got them divided up and onto work.

President alternated between strike and segregation - still trying to get school statement out tomorrow. Hung in balance until 5:00 and then decided to go. Harlow riding herd on it, with Ehrlichman jumping between the two projects. President obviously thoroughly enjoying the pressure and need for fast action. Stayed at EOB all day except to come over for leaders meeting - that lasted so long he had to postpone TV fifteen minutes. Rushed into little office, quickly read final draft over (Rose was late getting it typed), and then went on the air, with excellent seven minute statement. Had signed State of Emergency and Order for troops at leaders meeting. Went right back to EOB and to work on school statement. There until 5:30 - back for meeting with Labor group, building trades, then Harlow and Ehrlichman about statement until 7:35, when he left to get dressed for 8:00 African dinner. A really busy and maybe momentous day.

First results appear to show some success, as some of the big locals vote to go back to work. But New York still out, and troops moving in tonight. A real test because we'll have a tough time if they decide to stay out and then Congress starts moving to raise their pay. Will have to face possible veto - and if no settlement soon, strike could easily spread back out across country and into other unions.



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Blount got into a flap with the Army over who's giving orders. Ehrlichman had revised Red's timing and quantity of original troop movement. I had to call Army and tell them to take orders from Postmaster General only. Ehrlichman, of course, concurs.

President again completely cool, tough, firm and totally in command; fully aware of it, and loving it.