



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

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Thursday, February 27 and Friday, February 28.

Rome

Arrived late afternoon - 45 minutes late because of delays in Berlin. Very impressive arrival ceremonies. They had a red velvet tent and stand on the field and lots of troops.

Drive into city was great. We came along the Appian Way - very picturesque countryside, roads lined all the way with people. Very impressive motorcycle escort using the huge palace guards. Went by Caracalla, the Coliseum, the Forum, etc., with lots and lots of people. Not as enthusiastic as Berlin, but they were there.

At Quirinale Palace another impressive ceremony in the courtyard with national anthems, etc. Then President to private talks with Saragat and leaders. Basic staff is staying at the palace and it is really something! Beautiful floors, gold and white walls and molding. Tapestries everywhere, murals on walls and ceilings. Everyone in huge suites, lavish bathrooms, etc., except me. I have the scullery maid's room in the President's suite and it's pretty bad; but the surroundings are magnificent. Wish I could get pictures inside. Palace guards all along the corridors. All seven feet tall, carrying swords. Salute every time we walk by.

We went to Saragat's dinner in the palace, about a hundred at U-shape table. I sat next to Director of Christian Democrat Party. Neither he nor the man on the other side spoke English.

Dinner was seven courses - vegetable soup, fish, veal with vegetables, asparagus with sauce (as separate course), great pastry with raspberry whipped cream, fruit and sweets and candies. Very dietetic. Toasts were long and stereotyped. No great response. Dinner also long, President now meeting with citizens groups, and it's midnight.

Guess there's been some demonstrating - Juanich is at hotel by Embassy and not anxious to go out. Reports are about three hundred students, 4 blocks from Palace.



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Friday morning Rose and I went to St. Peter's, still as impressive as before. Toured the whole main floor and the tomb, bought some rosaries at the store to be blessed on Sunday.

In each of our rooms is a big silver tray with a bowl of candied almonds, a plate of fresh fruit, an ice bucket with a large carafe of fresh orange juice and a bottle of water, a bowl of ice, glasses, bottles of scotch, vodka, Grand Marnier and Strega, a bowl of sugar and a beautiful porcelain bowl of bonbons (even in my hovel). Also a beautiful art book on the Quirinale Palace, and an assortment of cigars and cigarettes.

One nice feature at the dinner was full orchestra in the balcony playing a program alternating between American and Italian composers.

Italians near me at dinner emphasized the imperative need for European unity, and said Germany held the key. That we (United States) must find a way to guarantee Germany's territorial integrity - without this, no hope of unity. Also felt Britain must enter the common market - and will - but it will take three to four years (until "after de Gaulle").