



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

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Saturday, January 2.

At Camp David. The President had me over to Aspen at 2:45, and I was there for three hours for just a general discussion in his study. He spent all the time inside. He hasn't been out in the snow at all, although it is beautiful here at Aspen. He's obviously been doing a lot of reading, but also some general homework. There's no apparent progress on getting ready for the Monday night TV. He did want to have the material for the program ready by noon tomorrow. He had several general items in mind, apparently, no voluminous notes, as there often is. He wanted to be very sure we got the statistics on Presidential activity really worked up well and out to Congressional leaders and our own people, so as to keep that story going. He thinks Ziegler ought to do a once a month recap on a slow news day, to build up a cumulative effect and eventually get through on this point, and also the graciousness to our enemies story.

He discussed the general PR question. He's concerned about the memos that we're doing, getting out and also the danger that in getting all those memos in to him, he will overreact and try to change himself as Johnson did. Also, by writing the memos there's a tendency on the part of the staff to shift responsibility to what the President should do, rather than what the staff should or is doing. He made one interesting point, which is the need to really get to work on our foreign policy PR; because this is our strongest point, and, especially since the death of de Gaulle, we have a real opportunity to build the President as the world leader. Muskie and all the rest of them will try to move in on this field, but we must continue to dominate. He also wants to be sure that we are developing some PR activities for Tricia and Julie, particularly on television. Among other ideas, he thought we might try having an hour press interview with the top ten or twelve foreign correspondents that are here from primarily the European countries. This is the kind of thing he wants us to explore to assert leadership in world affairs.

Back to Tricia and Julie. He wants to look at the big TV personalities in the key states and see if we can't get them into some things there; either have those people come to the White House for interviews, or get Tricia and Julie out into the states.



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Also, we need to do more in building up Cabinet and staff activity on a public basis. Try to get some of the Moynihan type thrust into their appearances. For Cabinet meetings, he wants to be sure there's one guy set to pump things up at each meeting. And he also applies this to staff meetings. He's obviously been giving some thought to the need to build up staff morale and to keep our people cranked up. He wants MacGregor, for instance, to take the responsibility for firing up the Congressmen. He thinks he ought to meet with the staff at the top level and second level more frequently. He wants to be sure we follow up on the Tkach deal on the hardworking President.

He also got into a discussion of the need for a staff intellectual. He had in mind Robert Nisbitt in California. But he thinks he needs one highly regarded academic around as a house intellectual to stimulate thinking, give the President someone to talk to from time to time, and to work with the rest of the staff on generating ideas.

He got into the speech writing problem again, the need to get lift into a speech, and to do that, you have to have emotion. And referred to a letter from Charles Malek two years ago which emphasized the need for the pithy, memorable phrase. This led him into the need for getting into reading the mail and working up better plans for television, and again, pursuing the intellectual group.

He then got into some general schedule planning for 1971. He's thinking about having three or four breakfasts for the Republicans in Congress to try and cover all of them, 50 at a time, right at the beginning of the session and, hopefully, do this as a way to avoid having to have individual or small groups of Congressmen in for talks as we go along. He's inclined against that because it always turns into a gripe session and, invariably, something that he says gets misinterpreted. If we do these breakfasts, he also thinks that will preclude the necessity of doing SOS, Chowder, and Marching and those other groups.

He's decided to keep Romney, but figures the price is that he gives up the Voluntary Action Center. He wants to use him more as an advocate out making speeches also. He discussed the



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Klein removal and wants that now done on the basis of keeping Herb with his title, but eliminating his administrative responsibility. He wants to be sure I should not do this in a brutal way. He says if we're going to keep these people, like Romney and Klein, we should make it as happy an arrangement as we can.

I raised the question of trip plans. And he still hadn't decided what to do next week. But after I had gone back to Laurel, he called a little later to say he had talked with Mrs. Nixon, and they decided to go to California and we're to go ahead and set up those plans.

End of January 2.