



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

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Wednesday, December 23.

The Colson story in last night's paper was a major item today, as the President was determined we should try to find the source of the leak and I had a number of people spending considerable effort to try to do so. We finally tracked it down to somebody on the conservative side on the Hill who was genuinely concerned that Colson was going to be appointed National Chairman and, in order to protect Dole's franchise, was trying to destroy Colson.

I had a long talk with Nofziger, who was the most knowledgeable guy in this area and made a major pitch for trying to get the Conservatives to shape up and work with us instead of playing their frantic games that are only self-destructive, as well as harmful to us. I don't know whether it will do any good, but Nofziger, at least, gets the point.

We agreed to go ahead on the TV show, but set the date for January 4, on a Monday night, which is a little later than all our staff people wanted to do it, but it works out better, really, overall. The President decided also to go ahead with the press conference, but without announcing it ahead of time. He's toying with general schedule thinking for the next week. He wants to keep the time basically clear, but with one newsworthy event each day to maintain the point of the President working through the period when Congress has taken off.

Another long talk regarding Klein and the need to make a change there. The President is absolutely determined that we go ahead on that as well as with Chotiner, so I've got to make those moves right after Christmas. I discussed that whole thing with Ehrlichman at great length this morning, but neither of us came up with much in the way of solutions.

John Connally called at home this evening, disturbed because he had gotten word somehow that, the day after-- or several days after his announcement, somebody in Washington ordered all of his tax returns sent up to Washington from Texas. He's very upset that someone's playing games here and wants to be sure we get on top of it, so I'll check on that. It's interesting that he would know this had been done, which shows that he's got his sources in the local IRS office. Also



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interesting that he reacted as strongly and quickly as he did. I confronted him then with the report that we had that Charlie Walker expects to stay on. He dismissed that lightly, as being an agreement by Walker that he would not leave immediately, but would remain until May and then would be leaving, thus giving Connally time to get his feet on the ground and select a new Under Secretary. He thinks, on the basis of the way things are developing in the public mind, that we're getting to the point where the President might productively lash the Congress. He feels that Congress is coming through now as being very unproductive, and that we could benefit from taking them on.

End of December 23.