



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

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Saturday, December 5.

President came in late. Spent the morning kind of cleaning up loose ends before he left for Camp David at 2:00. Got back on the writer thing as he analyzed last night and the speech, and wants Price really to go all out for a top speechwriter who can get mood and attitude across, and leave something for the audience to think about, establish some sense of leadership, move the audience, so people will walk out and say that's a great speech. He feels none of the writers we have now can move people. And that if we had a writer who could, he would do more speeches.

He discussed the press conference, and decided the best time to do it would be at 7:00, rather than prime time. His rationale is that you should only use prime time when there's a big issue up, not just for the routine periods, like this. The major interest in the press conference now is just the fact of his doing it. He thinks this is one that won't have any particular impact on people. We then talked about future plans, and he's thinking of doing an office-type press conference in January, since he'll be doing the State of the Union on television. And then probably a prime time press conference from the West or Midwest in February.

He got back on the Connally thing, and wants to be sure I get a hold of him tonight, and make the points just as he had covered them on the plane last night. We started in on the purge list, but Henry walked in, so we concentrated only on some of the specific problems of State, and then dropped the subject as President shifted to a meeting with Ehrlichman, Shultz, and Weinberger. He did first have Colson bring in the photographs and file on Teddy Kennedy's activities in Paris. President seemed to be pleased with the evidence we have on this and wants Colson to follow up on getting it out.

I finally got Connally on the phone at about 11:00 tonight, and interestingly enough, he seems to be favorably inclined towards taking the job. He was obviously pleased that I had called, and that I felt as strongly as I did about his taking it. He made the point that he wasn't interested in just being Secretary of Treasury or any other department, but he was very much impressed with what the President said about wanting his help on a broad basis and wanting to put him on the NSC.



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He has the problem of personal finances, and will have to make extensive adjustments. He's apparently paying about \$80,000 or \$90,000 a year in interest now, so he'll have to divest himself to reduce the interest load. He said he'd try like hell to do this, because he recognized the importance of taking on the assignment. One of his concerns, although he felt it probably would not be a problem, was the flak we'd get from within the Republican Party, and the concern that they might waylay him at every corner. He's also concerned about the timing and whether he can divest and organize his financial things in time to meet the President's deadline of January 20. He had talked with his children tonight and with his wife, and found no negative block there. He's going to meet with his partner tomorrow. He wants to be sure in our mind—in his own mind—that he can make the contribution that the President wants. He recognizes the problem of no leadership in either of the Parties. He was highly pleased and delighted with the President's remarks to him, said he would do anything to help him, but wants to be sure he really can help by doing this. If he does do it, he'll do anything in his power to do it right.

End.