



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

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Wednesday, May 21.

Chief Justice day - and a very strange day. I spent almost the entire day on the Chief Justice announcement. It worked out very well - following basically the plan President and I worked out last night.

Lots of discussions in President's office on various details. A real project to pull everything together. Had to let networks know by 1:00 at latest to get set up by 7:00. Mitchell met with Burger at noon, and didn't call me until just before 1:00. Barely made it. Used all the troops - had Roger Ailes down to produce. (He blew things pretty well, mistimed "Hail to the Chief", forgot the flags on the podium, etc. Probably would have done better without him, but CBS producer was a real nervous type). In general, staging was excellent, President very good, also Burger.

We had to whip up a bio during the afternoon - Buchanan did it by phone interview.

Main coup was that it was really a complete secret until actually announced. Pretty hard to do in this business. We told no one on the staff, and press got no leads. Snuck Burger and his family in through the Treasury Building tunnel - so no one saw them at White House gates. Brought Cabinet into East Room on live TV - then family, then President and Burger.

President zinged Fortas pretty well by saying Burger above reproach in business and personal. Burger zinged political appointees pretty well by saying what an honor President had bestowed on all sitting judges.

We did a good job of pre-programming, and it worked. Wires are loaded with favorable comments. Now we'll see if the papers will carry them.

Had long dinner session with Ehrlichman and Kissinger regarding President's PR concerns. Found no solution, but some ideas for improvements. All part of overall reappraisal. Still need a lot more.



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President in talking about need to understand press and especially *New York Times*, said "I know our guys will say Bob Semple is a nice guy, and Kosygn is probably kind to his mother, but all that is totally irrelevant."