



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

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Thursday, October 23, 1969

Busy day. Started with another of our schools for Congressmen, this time on narcotics. Had Art Linkletter come in to make part of the presentation. Ehrlichman said it was very successful. Democratic leaders outdid themselves in jumping on the bandwagon. President extremely impressed and is now much more "up" on the whole problem, and fully determined to charge ahead and get something done. (That is proving to be a very valuable fringe benefit of these sessions). President now wants education funds tripled, huge attack on media for going along, exploration of all ways to stop traffic, tie in dope with organized crime, etc.

Fourth draft of Vietnam speech in today. President had no time to review it. Big problem building as liberals have (very cleverly) shifted ground away from blasting President to saying they're with him. The main result is a massive build-up of hopes for major breakthrough in November 3 speech. Problem is there won't be one - and the let-down will be tremendous. Obvious they are intentionally building him up for the biggest possible fall. Even the stock market is soaring up on peace hopes. Speech will be good, and will clearly state the case and would under normal circumstances be very effective, and probably buy us another couple of months. Under the present situation, a massive adverse reaction could conceivably be developed the next day, and built up over ten days into the November 13-15 demonstrations with horrible results. No real way to stem this now. White House and Laird are trying to squelch specific speculation, i.e., Hugh Scott's call for a unilateral cease-fire, etc., but it doesn't have much effect, and clear general impression is being created that something big is brewing.

Good chat-type session with President and Ehrlichman and Harlow, on this morning's dope meeting, plans for augmentation, etc. President in good relaxed spirits. Kept Ehrlichman in after for another hour, keeps saying he needs more time to work on speeches, etc., then doesn't use it.