



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

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Thursday, March 2.

In Key Biscayne. President had me over first thing this morning for about four-hours. Henry came in for the second half of it. He feels Henry isn't getting across on the public relations standpoint on the President's handling of the situations in China. He says the main thing for us in China is the President's position as a big league operator. He's done it for years. The unusual world statesman capability, the personal qualities of the man. He wants to refer to this as a classic battle between a couple of heavyweights, each with his own style. Get off the issues and on the man. Get the man above the battle and analyze the trip in that way. Emphasize his enormous background experience, subtlety, toughness. Kissinger's feeling after he sits in the meetings. His idea of lowering the voices when things are tough.

We spent quite a little time on schedule, looking at just general planning. He's still pretty loose as how he wants to approach his basic scheduling strategy, but feels he won't give any speeches and will pretty much stay very Presidential, working at the White House, minimum of exposure, so on. He does want to do an in-office press conference next Thursday, wanted Buchanan to develop a briefing book on that.

Buchanan called me this afternoon to say that he had thought the whole thing over and decided he had to resign and would like to come down Friday evening and meet on the shuttle plane-- or the courier plane and meet with the President to tell him he was leaving and why. I jumped on him pretty hard on the basis that he had no right to interrupt the President's brief time off with something like this, and also that he basically had no right to resign at all. He feels he's got to be his own man, but he can't support the communiqué, and that if he can't then he has no business staying on the staff. He seems to overlook the fact that his leaving would create a major stir and shatter a lot of the confidence that's now developing in the China trip, but I don't know whether I'll be able to persuade him of that. I discussed that whole-- the whole thing with Kissinger and Ehrlichman at dinner tonight, and we all agreed that we've got to find some way to avoid



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Buchanan leaving. That he just doesn't have the right to do it, and he's got to swallow his pride and problems and find a way to live with it.

End of March 2.