



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

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Thursday, April 29.

Press conference day. The President spent the whole day at the EOB preparing, other than a few minutes in the office to announce Jayne Spain to the Civil Service Commission and have a brief chat with Haig and me. He called several times on the phone on odds and ends. Then, during the session I had with him at the EOB and again later in the Oval Office, he raised the question of the mood of the President in the press conference. Buchanan had urged that he hit it harder and express real anger regarding the demonstrators, etcetera. Also wanted him to refer to the politicians who criticized us, which of course, the President will lay off of completely. I made the point today, I thought he ought to stay consistent and take the same tone that he has in the past, which as it turns out, he ended up doing. He also made the point a couple of times in phone calls that we shouldn't let people get so excited about all these things, that none of it is a crisis, and it's all going to work out very well.

He was very pleased afterwards by the way the thing had worked out. Most of the questions were on Vietnam and China—only one domestic policy question, and that on the school busing decision by the court. He particularly liked two new lines that he developed regarding foreign policy: one, in relation to China, he said now that we've broken the ice, we have to test the water; and regarding Vietnam, that it isn't a matter of peace in our time, but referring to the teenagers, a question of peace in their times. He did have the feeling afterwards that it had been a lot of work, and he questions how frequently he can invest that much time and effort in these things. But I really believe they're the most effective thing he does, and that it's well worth the effort that goes into it.

I had to call Rogers this morning as a result of his speech flaps yesterday and the day before. Finally got to him in Ankara after a couple of abortive attempts to talk to him on the plane. Covered the point the President wanted me to raise, using the press conference tonight as the lead-in thing. The President, if pressed, was going to have to, in effect, say that the Secretary didn't mean what he said. This had the desired effect on Rogers, and he backed off completely



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from his point that any Russian-Chinese differences that arise from our initiatives would be a dividend. He said that isn't what he meant at all. He was concerned enough that, after we'd discussed it thoroughly and hung up, he called back in a few minutes to reiterate his view as to how the President should approach the question at the press conference tonight. In the meeting with Haig in the President's office at midday, the President told Haig to call Dobrynin and clear up the points raised by Rogers, so that he wasn't given the impression that we were trying to play a game with the Soviets. The President himself cleared it up pretty well in the press conference tonight, in fact, extremely well. [Unclear] There was no further problem on this whole subject.

End of April 29.