Date: May 1, 1972
Time: Unknown after 2:55 pm and 3:02 pm
Location: Oval Office

The President met with Ronald L. Ziegler and Stephen B. Bull. The recording began at an unknown time while the conversation was in progress.

Richard M. Helms

President's meeting with White House secretaries
- Rose Mary Woods
- Alexander P. Butterfield
- Corsage

Woods entered at an unknown time after 2:55 pm.

- Photographs

The President’s schedule

The President, et al., left at 3:02 pm.

Date: May 1, 1972
Time: Unknown after 3:08 pm and 4:08 pm
Location: Oval Office

Unknown men [Secret Service agents] met at an unknown time between 3:08 pm and 4:08 pm.

[Unintelligible]

The President’s location
- Cabinet Room

[Unintelligible]

The unknown agents left at an unknown time before 4:08 pm.
Date: May 1, 1972
Time: Unknown time after 4:11 pm and 5:29 pm
Location: Oval Office

The President met with William P. Rogers and Henry A. Kissinger. The recording began at an unknown time while the conversation was in progress.

Soviet Union
- Letter
- Intentions
  - Request for evaluations
    - Georges J.R. Pompidou
    - Edward R.G. Heath
    - Willy Brandt
- Negotiations
  - Ronald L. Ziegler
- President's Paper
  - Gerard C. Smith
  - Vladimir S. Semenov
  - Leonid I. Brezhnev’s paper
- US position
  - Statement
- Smith
  - Instructions
- Vietnam issue
  - Soviet interest
  - Summit
  - Risks
  - Brandt

Vietnam
- Paris peace negotiations
  - Kissinger’s forthcoming trip to Paris
- Air strikes
  - Hanoi
  - Haiphong
    - Times
    - Duration
    - Intensity of strikes
-B-52's
-Naval gunfire
  -USS Newport News
-Tactical air strikes [TACAIR]
-Intensity
-Military targets
  -Troop training areas
  -Adm. Thomas H. Moorer
  -Abrams
-Negotiations
  -North Vietnam proposals
  -Success
  -Announcement
    -Timing
    -Negotiations
    -Rogers's itinerary in Europe
-Soviet Summit
-Rogers's trip to Europe
  -Statements on plans
    -Wording
-North Vietnamese offensive
  -US reactions
    -Impact on Summit
      -Rogers's statement to Europeans
-US stance
  -Relation to Vietnam
  -Conditions
    -Soviet support for North Vietnam
    -Abrams’s report
-Likelihood
-British support
-Pompidou
-Brandt
-Major issues
  -Importance
    -Compared with Vietnam
-US interests in Vietnam
-Brandt
-Heath
Strategic Arms Limitation Talks [SALT]
- Rogers's trip to Europe
- Smith
- President's paper
  - Submarine launched ballistic missiles [SLBM]
    - Brezhnev
    - Smith
- Soviet proposals
- US proposals
  - Submarine
  - Missiles
    - SLBMs
  - Compared with Soviet proposals
- National Security Decision Memorandum [NSDM]
- President's letter to Smith
- Submarines
  - Soviet development
  - US programs
- Multiple independently-targetable reentry vehicle [MIRV] issue
  - US missiles
    - Dwight D. Eisenhower Administration
    - Robert S. McNamara
    - Status of new missile
      - Launching
      - Payload
        - Compared to SS-9

Soviet Summit
- Rogers's trip to Europe
  - Trade
  - European Security
  - Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction [MBFR]
  - Middle East issues

Ronald L. Ziegler entered at 4:23 pm.

- Communications
  - Reports on Vietnam
- Return to US
- Duration of trip
Rogers and Kissinger left at 4:24 pm.

Rogers
- Request for paper

Soviet Union
- Ziegler's statement
  - President's exchanges with Brezhnev
  - Purpose
  - Discussions with Smith and senior advisors
  - Rogers, Melvin R. Laird, Richard H. Helms, Moorer, Kissinger
- Issues for resolution

Kissinger entered at 4:26 pm.

Soviet Union
- Smith
  - Statement
  - Brezhnev paper
  - Rogers
  - Submarines
  - President's proposals
- President's statement
  - SALT Agreement
    - Likelihood of conclusion
    - Improvement
  - Smith
    - Instructions
    - Return to Helsinki
  - Exchanges with Soviets
    - Purpose
    - Bases
  - Agreement
    - Likelihood
    - Smith announcement
  - Conclusion of statement
    - Laird, Moorer, Helms
  - SALT Agreement
    - Smith proposals
  - Rogers
  - Ziegler's statement
-Deletions
-Smith
-Likelihood
-Conclusion
-Discussions
-Smith
  -President's instructions
  -Soviet reactions
  -Brezhnev
-Conclusion
  -Press questions
-Sensitivity of negotiations
-Conclusion
  -Soviet Summit
-Ziegler's statement
  -Rose Mary Woods
  -Response to questions
  -Alexander M. Haig, Jr.’s review

Ziegler left at 4:36 pm.

-Smith’s proposals
-Anatoliy F. Dobrynin
  -Brezhnev

Stephen B. Bull entered at an unknown time after 4:36 pm.

Haig meeting with President

Bull left at an unknown time before 4:38 pm.

Soviet Union
  -SALT
  -Dobrynin
    -Meeting with Kissinger
  -President's statement
  -Brezhnev proposals
  -Rogers
  -Laird, Helms and Moorer
    -Support for Brezhnev proposals
  -Rogers
Haig entered at 4:38 pm.

-Submarines
  -Soviet development
-Smith's proposal
  -The President’s view
  -Previous position
    -National Security Council [NSC] meeting
-SLBM
-Brezhnev proposals
-Rogers's judgment

Alexander P. Butterfield entered at 4:39 pm.

President's schedule
  -Meeting with legislative leaders
  -Day

Butterfield left at 4:40 pm.

Soviet Union
  -SALT
    -US goals
      -Formulation
      -Legislative support
      -Problems
  -Smith
    -Instructions
    -Preparation
  -Proposals
    -Orders to Smith
      -NSDM
  -Soviet strategy
  -Smith’s strategy
    -Brezhnev
    -Problems
    -US proposals
 Conv. No. 716-2 (cont.)

NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

Tape Subject Log
(rev. Dec-01)

-Soviet position
-US proposals
  -Laird, Helms, Moorer
  -Submarines
    -Rogers’s evaluation
    -Wording of proposals
    -Soviet proposals
    -Soviet missiles
      -Calculations
  -Moorer and Laird
  -Smith’s position
-Anti-ballistic missiles [ABMs]
  -Radius
  -Sites
-Smith’s proposals at cabinet meeting
  -Kissinger’s view
  -Haig’s view
  -SLBMs
-US proposals
  -Congressional funding
    -Laird
      -Undersea long-range missile system [ULMS]
    -John C. Stennis
  -Soviet missile numbers
-Submarines
  -Kissinger’s position on inclusion in SALT
-A forthcoming meeting
  -Kissinger's attendance
-Soviet proposals
  -Smith’s position
    -U. Alexis Johnson
    -ABMs
    -SLBMs
    -Offensive missiles
-Rogers’s judgment
  -Kissinger’s view
  -Brezhnev
-Smith and Rogers
  -Motives
    -Kissinger’s view
-President's position
  -Public perceptions
  -Polls
    -Soviet trip
    -Bombing

Vietnam
  -H. R. (“Bob”) Haldeman
  -News stories
    -Ceasefire proposals
    -Kissinger’s position compared with the President’s position
  -Source
    -State Department
    -Washington Special Action Group [WSAG]
    -Marvin L. Kalb
    -Kissinger's position

-Negotiations
  -President’s and Kissinger’s positions
    -News stories
    -Reasons
  -Kissinger’s statement
    -Cease-fire proposal
    -Le Duc Tho
  -North Vietnamese perceptions of President
    -Kissinger’s statement to Dobrynin

-North Vietnamese offensive
  -Kontum
  -Quang Tri
    -Capture
  -Army of the Republic of Vietnam [ARVN] performance
    -Commander
    -Forces

Ronald L. Ziegler entered at 4:51 pm.

-US air strikes
  -Hue
  -Kontum
  -ARVN performance

SALT
- Agreement
  - Confidential exchanges
  - Likelihood
  - Increase
  - Ziegler’s statement
  - President’s meeting with Smith
    - President’s instructions
    - Return to Helsinki
    - President’s instructions
  - Soviet response
    - Brezhnev

Ziegler left at 4:56 pm.

Vietnam
  - Report
    - Laird
  - North Vietnamese offensive
    - ARVN performance
      - Abrams
      - Reports on I Corps
      - Provincial capitals
        - Kontum, An Loc
    - Counter offensive
      - I Corps
      - Hue
      - Goals
      - Kontum

- ARVN
  - Strength
  - Strategy
    - Provincial towns
  - Losses
    - Kontum
    - 23rd division
    - 22nd division
  - Hue
    - Value
  - Strategy
    - Central Highlands
    - Haig’s view
Conv. No. 716-2 (cont.)

-Nixon

-Kontum
-Hue

-Targets
-Air power
-Effectiveness

-Air power
-Abrams

-ARVN
-Quang Tri
-Division commander
-Control
-Performance
-Possible press story
-Meeting with Haig
-Performance
-Counterattack
-Haig’s view
-An Loc
-Performance
-Tai Nien [?]
-Performance
-Air power
-Dependence
-Artillery
-Tanks and artillery
-Comparison with Soviet
-Soviet weapons
-Systems
-Introduction
-Missiles

-ARVN
-Chances of success
-Haig’s judgment
-North Vietnamese resolve
-Haig’s view
-Kissinger’s previous prediction
-Kissinger’s view
-Dien Bien Phu comparison
-Air power
-III corps
-Tanks
Ziegler entered at 5:04 pm.

SALT
- Ziegler's statement
- Listing of advisors
- Talks with Brezhnev
- Subjects of discussion
- Questions
  - The President’s May 1971 statement
  - ABM
  - Offensive weapons
- SLBMs
- Statements
  - Wording
  - SLBMs
  - Weapons systems
- SLBMs
  - Discussion
- Leaks
- Breakthrough
- ABMs
- Discussions with press
- Smith
  - President’s instructions
- Scope of talks

Soviet summit
- Plans
- Questions from press
- Agreement
  - Conclusion
  - Conditions
  - Progress in negotiations
  - ABM questions
  - Exchanges between President and Brezhnev
    - Number
- Press interest

Vietnam
- North Vietnamese offensive
  - ARVN morale
- Negotiations
  - Plenary sessions
  - Progress
- Continuation
- Quang Tri
  - Loss
  - Kissinger
    - Ziegler’s comments
- ARVN
  - The President’s view
  - North Vietnamese weapons
    - Sophistication
    - Soviet Union
- US air support
- Ziegler’s statement
  - Losses
- North Vietnamese losses
  - Extent
- Attacks on North Vietnam by US
  - Military targets
- Commentary
- Losses
  - Abrams

Ziegler left at 5:06 pm.

- ARVN performance
  - I Corps
- Strength
  - Determination
  - Weaponry
  - US underestimations
- Quang Tri
  - Shelling
    - Number of rounds
    - Ammunition dump
      - Destruction
      - Impact on morale
- Naval gunfire
- Intensity
- Attrition
- Number of troops
  - Verification
- US response
  - Bombing of North Vietnam
    - Extent of destruction
- Blockade
  - Haiphong
  - Soviet concerns
- Soviet activities
  - Concerns over US actions
    - Le Duc Tho
- Soviets
  - Letter from Brezhnev
    - Settlement
- Negotiations
  - Le Duc Tho
- North Vietnamese offensive
  - Hanoi
  - Haiphong
    - Bombing
      - US public opinion
    - Air strikes
      - Intensity
      - B-52s
        - Number
      - TACAIR strikes
        - Level
        - Damage
          - Comparison with Lyndon B. Johnson
            - Bombing halt
- Naval response
  - Positioning of ships
    - USS Newport News
    - Zumwalt
  - Gunfire support
    - Shore batteries
- Blockade
  - Relationship to president's trip to Soviet Union
  - Conditions
-President’s strategy
  -Military response
  -Soviet summit
    -Domestic and congressional concerns
-Air strikes
  -Scheduling
  -Plenary sessions
-Negotiations
  -Outcome
  -Private meeting
  -Plenary session
    -Possible walkout by William J. Porter
-Cancellation
-North Vietnamese actions
-Cancellation
  -News report
-Negotiations
  -Plenary session
  -Porter’s reaction
    -Quang Tri, Kontum attacks
    -Possible walkout
    -Resumption
      -Conditions
-Kontum
  -Possible loss
    -Timing
-Hue
  -Shelling
    -Fire Base Bastongne
      -130mm artillery
      -B-52s
-Artillery of North Vietnamese
  -Destruction
    -TACAIR
-Air Force actions
  -The President’s view

Kissinger and Haig left at 5:29 pm.
Conv. No. 716-2 (cont.)

Conversation No. 716-3

Date: May 1, 1972
Time: 5:31 pm - 5:53 pm
Location: Oval Office

The President met with Henry A. Kissinger.

Vietnam
  - Kissinger’s forthcoming meeting with Le Duc Tho
  - Public record
    - Statement by President
      - The President’s view
        - Wording
      - An announcement
        - Statement
        - Strength
      - North Vietnamese offensive
        - President's response
          - Public support
          - Polls
          - Bombing
          - Extent
        - Negotiations
          - US demands
            - North Vietnamese action
              - Demilitarized zone [DMZ]
              - March 29, 1972 status quo ante
              - Prisoners of war [POW] release
            - US bombing
            - US proposals
              - January 25, 1972
              - Withdrawal
              - POWs
              - North Vietnamese response
        - Negotiations
          - Kissinger's opening statement
          - North Vietnamese [Le Duc Tho’s] responses
          - Tenor of Kissinger's remarks
President's Intentions

North Vietnamese offensive

Alexander M. Haig, Jr.'s view

National Security Council [NSC] meeting

Melvin R. Laird's previous predictions

Vietnamization


Risks

Success

Reasons

US aid

Tanks

Japan

Trained personnel

South Vietnamese Losses

Military Region [MR] 1

South Vietnamese tank losses

North Vietnamese artillery

Soviet weapons

Effectiveness

North Vietnamese artillery

Number of rounds

Estimates

Quang Tri

An Loc

Cambodian operation

Kissinger's view

South Vietnamese response

Offensive capabilities

Defensive capabilities

South Vietnam

Cambodia

Offensive ability

US support

North Vietnamese offensive

US response

Lack of new ideas

Laird

Adm. Thomas H. Moorer

Abrams

South Vietnamese defeat
Conv. No. 716-3 (cont.)

-US public response
-US public opinion
  -Kissinger's dinner with Rowland Evans and Thomas W. Braden
  -US response to offensive
  -The President’s view
-North Vietnamese offensive
- North Vietnamese targets
  -Selection
    -Kissinger’s forthcoming briefings
      -Abrams
      -Moorer
    -Briefing of President
    -Options
    -Dikes
  -B-52s
    -Populated areas
      -Problems
      -Press coverage
    -Risks
  -Haiphong
    -Recovery
    -Air strikes
      -Piers
      -Petroleum, oil and lubricant [POL] dumps
    -B52s
  -Air strikes
  -Soviet weapons
    -Quality

Soviet Union
  -Military capabilities
    -North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO]
      -Gen. Andrew J. Goodpaster
    -Compared with US military capabilities
      -The President’s view

US military establishment
  -Reorganization
    -1972 election
  -John B. Connally
    -Appointment as Secretary of Defense
The President’s view

Vietnam
- North Vietnamese offensive
  - Air strikes
    - Connally’s opinion
    - Support in Texas
    - Destruction
      - Than Hoa
    - Weather
      - Kissinger, Haig
  - South Vietnamese performance
    - Abrams’s evaluation
    - Laird
    - Morale
  - Air strikes
    - Impact
  - B-52s
    - North Vietnamese casualties
  - South Vietnamese actions
    - Counterattacks
    - Plans
      - Dong Ha, Quang Tri
  - Ronald L. Ziegler’s statements
    - Stance to press
  - North Vietnamese offensive
  - South Vietnamese losses
    - Public stance
    - Press reports
      - Impact on US public
      - Laos operation
    - Provincial capitals
  - Memorandum [?]
    - Retyping

Kissinger’s schedule

Kissinger left at 5:53 pm.
Date: May 1, 1972  
Time: 5:57-6:47 pm  
Location: Oval Office

The President met with H. R. (“Bob”) Haldeman.

Henry A. Kissinger
- Final instructions for meeting with Le Duc Tho
- Schedule

Vietnam
- Ronald L. Ziegler
- North Vietnamese offensive
  - Ceasefire
    - Kissinger's statements
      - Tone
        - Compared to the President
    - News summary
    - Haldeman's notes
      - Murray Marder
    - Meeting
      - John A. Scali, Ziegler
      - Kissinger
    - Discussion with President
- William P. Rogers’s statement
- Kissinger's statement
  - Differences from President
    - Rogers
    - Scali, Charles W. Colson and Ziegler
- State Department
- Richard M. Helms
- News reports
  - Distortions of Kissinger's statement
    - Le Duc Tho
    - President's approach
- Gen. Creighton W. Abrams, Jr.'s briefing
- Quang Tri
- Kontum
Conv. No. 716-4 (cont.)

-Kissinger entered at 6:01 pm.

-Soviet Union
  -Leonid I. Brezhnev's letter
  -Meeting with President
  -Vietnam
    -References
    -Differences
    -Soviet visit to Hanoi
      -Democratic Republic of Vietnam [DRV]
    -DRV readiness to negotiate
    -US military action
      -Bombing
        -Haiphong
    -President's visit to Soviet Union
      -Arrangements
        -Anatoliy F. Dobrynin
        -Leningrad
        -Television appearance
          -Text for translation
- Dwight L. Chapin
- Church service
  - Scali
- Public knowledge
- Church service
  - Publicity
  - William F. (“Billy”) Graham
- Soviet plane
  - Agreement
  - Chapin
  - Trip to Leningrad
  - Trip to Kiev
- Summit
  - Cancellation possibility
    - Soviet intentions
    - North Vietnamese offensive
    - Blockade
    - Prisoners of war [POWs]

Vietnam
- North Vietnamese offensive
  - Victories
    - Quang Tri
- Abrams's report
  - Army of the Republic of Vietnam's [ARVN] performance
    - Abrams’s view
  - Military leadership
    - Gen. [Forename unknown] Thieu [sp?]
    - Gen. Ngo Quang Truong
  - Hue, Kontum
  - Ellsworth F. Bunker
    - Nguyen Van Thieu
  - Prognosis
  - ARVN
    - Morale
      - Abrams's report
    - US air support
  - Battle zone
    - Air action
- Abrams's report
  - ARVN morale
- ARVN losses
  - Kontum
  - Hue
    - Impact of possible loss
    - Casualties
  - Number of refugees
  - Military Region [MR] One
  - Abrams's report
    - ARVN morale
  - North Vietnamese losses
  - US air support
  - ARVN performance
    - Cooperation among commanders
    - 25th Division
      - Activities
      - An Loc
    - Comparison with Quang Tri
  - Planning
  - ARVN performance
    - Compared with previous situation in Laos
  - Coordination
    - MR Three
    - MR Four
  - Weather
    - MR Three
    - MR Two
    - Hue
  - Abrams's report
    - President's evaluation
    - ARVN morale
      - Leadership in MR 1
      - Quang Tri
    - MR Two
      - 22nd Division
    - An Loc
  - ARVN performance
  - North Vietnamese losses
    - Calculations
    - US air power
  - ARVN losses
NIXON PRESIDENTIAL MATERIALS STAFF

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Conv. No. 716-4 (cont.)

-MR Three
  -25th Division
  -Tai Nien [sp?]  
  -An Loc
  -21st Division
-Units in action
-Abrams's report
-Laird
-The President’s view

Strategic Arms Limitation Talks [SALT]
-Previous meeting
- Laird’s performance

Vietnam
-Gen. Hoang Xuan Lam
-Kissinger's impression
-Haig
-Laos operation
-Abilities
-North Vietnamese offensive
-ARVN
  -1st Division
  -Performance at Firebase Bastogne
  -Haig’s view
  -Northern Group
-Hue area
-Quang Tri
-B-52 strikes
-Abrams's report
-Flexibility
-Air strikes
  -Impact on ARVN morale
  -Flexibility
  -Psychological effects
    -Hanoi and Haiphong
  -Saigon
  -Hanoi
-Schedule
-Blockade
-Kissinger briefing
Conv. No. 716-4 (cont.)

- Washington Special Action Group [WSAG] meeting
- Implementation
  - Necessity
    - South Vietnamese collapse
    - POWs
  - Impact on Soviets
- Soviet Summit
- President's speech
  - Mail response
    - Max Ascoli
      - Contribution to President's campaign
- North Vietnamese offensive
  - Abrams's report
    - Impact
  - ARVN performance
    - Provincial capitals
- Bunker
  - Meeting with Thieu
    - Purpose
      - Abrams's briefing
- North Vietnamese offensive
  - Losses
  - B-52 raids
    - Impact
      - Compared to World War II
  - Losses
    - Extent
  - Air strikes
    - Tactical air [TACAIR]
      - Impact
      - Number of planes
        - Compared to World War II
- Abrams's view
- Strength
  - Israel
    - Phantom airplanes
      - Performance in Middle East
- Dien Bien Phu
  - Viet Minh
- Negotiations in Paris
  - Kissinger's return to US
SALT

-President's meeting
-Adm. Thomas H. Moorer
-Rogers
-Gerard C. Smith
-The President’s view

-Brezhnev's proposals
-Contents
-Rogers’s view
-Moorer’s view
-Smith’s acceptance draft
-Kissinger’s view

-Dobrynin's response
-Smith's proposals
-Submarines
-Limits
-Moorer
-Haig
-Laird, Helms, Moorer
-Smith
-Rogers

-Submarine-launched ballistic missiles [SLBM]
-Rogers
-The President’s view
-Congress
-[Arms Control Disarmament Agency]
-Kissinger
-Brezhnev
-Smith
-Comments compared with those relating to Berlin Agreement
-John J. McCloy
-Gen. Lucius DuB. Clay, Jr.
-Motivation
-Kissinger's position
-Brezhnev proposals

Vietnam
-North Vietnamese offensive
- ARVN performance
- US bombing
- North Vietnamese attitude
- Bombing
  - Hanoi
  - Haiphong
  - Soviet Summit
    - Possibility of cancellation
- Press
- Kissinger's position
- Soviet Summit
  - Cancellation by Soviet Union
  - Intentions
  - Dobrynin
  - Cancellation by US
    - President's initiative
    - Ziegler
  - Press campaign
- Cambodia
- Laos
- Possible end of war
  - Timing
- North Vietnamese offensive
  - ARVN capabilities
    - North Vietnamese resolve
    - A helicopter
    - Losses
      - Missing in action [MIA]
      - Prisoners of war [POWs]
- US retaliation
- ARVN morale
  - Limit of endurance
- Artillery capacities
- Kissinger's trip
  - Message

Alexander P. Butterfield entered at 6:41 pm.

Kissinger left at 6:42 pm.

Rose Mary Woods
Items for the President’s signature

Butterfield left at 6:45 pm.

Woods
- Talked with the President about Quang Tri

SALT
- Smith
- Rogers's performance
  - The President’s view
  - Reason
  - Soviet submarines
    - President's response to proposals

Woods

John D. Ehrlichman

Manolo Sanchez entered at an unknown time after 6:45 pm.

President's schedule

Sanchez left at an unknown time before 6:47 pm.

Vietnam
- North Vietnamese offensive
  - Capabilities
  - Kissinger
  - US public opinion
    - Support for bombing
      - Haiphong
    - Kissinger’s view
      - Press
      - Haig
- Soviet Summit
  - Impact
  - Kissinger

Haldeman left at 6:47 pm.
Conversation No. 716-5

Date: May 1, 1972
Time: 6:48-6:49 pm
Location: Oval office

The President met with Alexander P. Butterfield.

The President’s schedule
- President's approval of agenda
  - Henry A. Kissinger's appearance

The President and Butterfield left at 6:49 pm.

Conversation No. 716-6

Date: May 1, 1972
Time: 6:49 pm
Location: Oval Office


Buzzer
- Test

The unknown agents left.