



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

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Tuesday, December 22. Another pretty busy day with a few breaks in between for discussion, especially late this afternoon.

Teddy Kennedy called this morning saying he had to talk to the President, that he had something urgent regarding prisoners of war. The President refused to talk to him, told Kissinger to return the call. Teddy refused to talk to Kissinger. Upshot was that Teddy got from the North Vietnamese a list of prisoners' names, which he made a big play with on the Senate floor. It turned out later, they were the same names we already had and the whole thing was something of a cruel hoax on everyone concerned.

The President had breakfast with Mansfield and discussed the whole problem of what to do about the Senate. Mansfield succeeded in convincing him not to attack the Congress, at least at this point.

We got into some discussion again of the problem of Kissinger's briefing Ziegler. This morning...

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...the problem was on the Cuban submarine activity...

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...and it's another case where Henry comes in and discusses things with the President, then Ziegler comes in and goes over the same ground, but Henry never gets around to giving Ziegler a rundown on what he ought to say.

Henry came up with the need to meet with the President today with AI Haig, and then tomorrow with Laird and Moorer because he has to use the President to force Laird and the military to go ahead with the President's plans, which they won't carry out without direct orders.

Some discussion about the need for a "Map Room Cabinet," a group of smart, inspirational guys that are good for the President to talk to, who will provide some lift, and so on. In particular, he wants Moynihan in this. He's also anxious that, in the regular Cabinet meetings, we try to develop some cheerleaders and get a little more enthusiasm. Of course, he's counting on Connally to provide a good chunk of this.

We discussed the possibility of a press conference. And his plan now is to do one in the office on Saturday to provide some action over the weekend. His idea would be to have five or six reporters in on a pool basis. Let them follow up their questions, and so forth, and then have them pool the material afterwards. Zieg argues that we have to record it and provide a transcript to the rest of the press, and so we're bogged down on that question, at least for the moment.

His strategy for other appearances is to go ahead with the idea of the televised interview, using correspondents from each of the three networks plus Dickerson for Public Broadcasting; do a one-hour show on January 4th. Then, on January 5th, he'll make a play, listing all the bills that



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are still pending before the Congress, and say that he's going to resubmit all of them on the first day of the new Congress, and call on the new Congress to skip the Easter recess and the Lincoln recess, in order to get the work caught up.

He and Pat had planned to go to Camp David for dinner with Julie and David on their anniversary this evening, but had to cancel because the weather prohibited flying and it's too long a drive on the icy roads.

He had a long talk with Rogers on the phone regarding the line for his press conference tomorrow. Told him to blast Teddy on the POW hoax, to take a hard line on the surveillance we're conducting on Cuba, and to play down Mansfield's proposal for POW exchange versus cease-fire. He also had Kissinger call Dole and have him take Teddy on mercilessly on this, which Dole will do tonight and tomorrow morning.

He met with the White House Fellows this afternoon and was very much impressed with the new group. So we've gotten that program out of the doghouse now. Last year he vowed he'd never meet with them again, because it really was a pretty ratty bunch. He now realizes it's a matter of who selects them. He's obviously getting tired. He has a very bad, red, right eye today. And he's starting, finally, to talk about the po--...

[End of Tape - end of December 22.]