



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

National Archives and Records Administration, Online Public Access Catalog Identifier: 7787364

Wednesday, April 14th. The President met with Stennis and Margaret Smith this morning on the military procurement, draft, and ABM questions. He feels strongly that we've got to force Defense to take on the fight on the ABM, that we'll, of course, not commit any Presidential involvement until the last two weeks before the vote; he wants Rogers and Laird to make statements on the necessity of ABM, especially for SALT. We're not to make any deals at all until vote time; he wants to get the new Senators briefed immediately, using Kissinger to do it; and find a way to hold the line until August. Obviously, if we can get some of the action we're after at SALT, that would preclude the problem, because we'll get the vote anyway then; but he doesn't want to have to give anything away prior to that.

The Texas drought has him concerned, mainly because Connally's pushing him on it. Connally was very discouraged by his conversation with Lincoln, and doesn't think we're doing all we can do, and that we're not getting enough of the word out and demagoguing it. He wants someone on this to follow up on Lincoln from a political standpoint, and be sure that we're getting political credit, maybe have Hardin go down to look the situation over.

He decided to go to California to greet the First Marine Division when they returned, but will shift the date from the 21st to the 30th, so he can go and spend a week out there, which will be the plan.

He got into quite a long discussion again this morning on the PR situation regarding Connally's point, which really differs from what other people are saying. He feels that the real problem, apart from what the President does, is that the Cabinet and staff don't have any passion; they don't show any commitment to the President and his policies. It has to be more than just reciting the facts; they've got to cry, be outraged, etcetera. This is true of Ziegler, Klein, and so on, too.



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He makes the point that a man is known by the men he selects around him. On this basis, the Garment theory is wrong regarding the idea that the country only wants good people. For example, the Texas situation with the drought is something we should be worrying about, the fact that we aren't getting the hay in, and so on, and we should say so. We need warmth, passion and strength. The Cabinet, in order to do this, has got to attack. That's why Agnew is a personality, even though he doesn't have warmth, because he does get out and attack. The story of the warmth and commitment can only be gotten out by the staff from private meetings. The President said, for example, to read Lasky's book on John Kennedy, which points out that all of him was a myth created by the talk of his staff and others. He raises the question then, whether in the press conferences and conversations, etcetera, on television—all the Q and A's—whether he should show more emotion and not be so responsible. He wants me to talk individually with Ehrlichman, Shultz, Kissinger, Finch, Rumsfeld, Garment, Price, Safire, Moore, Klein, Ziegler, and Scali on this whole question of whether he should change, not in terms of changing his image, but whether we as an Administration are reflecting a true picture. We can't change the man, but what people say about him can be changed. We can make different points than we're now making.

He had Henry in at midday and agreed to see Bob Murphy tomorrow afternoon to send him on his mission to Taipei. The China plan was discussed in some detail. They were reviewing the background of the President's initiatives on this, going clear back to his article for Foreign Affairs, which laid it out even before the campaign began and then a number of his speeches and other actions since then. The whole Asian tour, of course, was basically focused on opening lines to China, particularly the meetings with Yahya and Ceausescu...



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Audio Cassette 6, Side B, Withdrawn Item Number 9 [AC-6(B) Sel 5]

Duration: 5 seconds

...and the Indian foreign minister, plus later the meeting with Tito, and the...

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...messages they've been sending through Sainteny. Plus, of course, having forced Stoessel in Poland to set up the face-to-face meetings with the Chinese. All of this now appears to be paying off, as the ping-pong thaw takes effect.

The latest problem is the wedding question of what we do for White House staff. The President has now directed me to decide which White House staff are to be invited. He wants to keep it down to a minimum. He originally wasn't going to have any, but recognizes that he's got to do that. He also had Ziegler in to discuss press handling of the wedding, wants to be sure Ron's on top of all the details there, not leave it to Connie.

He had a meeting this afternoon with Bob Dole, didn't really cover anything. Dole had an idea that we ought to try to gin up a new cosmetic move regarding POW wives, and also had the idea of building one prototype SST instead of two, which we could do for the termination costs.

The President called at 8:00 this evening, very pleased because the Dow Jones had closed at 932 today on 19 million shares, which now puts it above the point where it was when the President came in and 300 points above the low last year. Obviously, this has been a source of concern to him, and he's thoroughly delighted to see it get back up where it belongs.



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End of April 14th.