



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

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Wednesday, July 14.

Bob Dole called this morning to say that he was concerned, because at the policy luncheon today, there was a great deal of bitching about the economy game plan amongst the Republican senators. Apparently, Scott is thinking about descending on the President, and Dole urges that we do something before he does, take some kind of initiative. They're all really upset at B, and especially are disturbed with Shultz and McCracken.

President got into few general items this morning on personnel: particularly the question of Flanigan to State, if we can make the right kind of deal; and then finalize Rumsfeld, either at OEP then NATO, or else dump him; and follow up on the question of Stans taking on the finance job; then maybe making Peterson head of OEP, so he could be a spokesman, not just a White House man.

At 9:45, he had Henry in, and we got into a long discussion of the whole international thing: first item being the Bruce problem, because the networks last night all reported that David Bruce was going to be leaving because we were dissatisfied with him, and he with us, which is not the case at all. So, we had Ziegler in to shoot that down, making the point that Bruce has the total confidence of the President and that the only discussion regarding his resignation concerns his personal medical condition, and we expect after the period of recuperation that he'll handle other special missions for the President.

President got to the Taiwan problem a couple of times. He's obviously very concerned about how to handle it and gets to thinking about the question of his being the one to scuttle Taiwan. He also was talking in general about planning for the Peking meeting and made the point that he's got to go into that meeting with complete preparation and no tension; that he's got to handle the things alone, and on a very free kind of basis.

Then we got into quite a discussion of the question of Henry giving a backgrounder on Friday, after the Thursday night announcement. Henry made the point that such a backgrounder is



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needed. First, because Kissinger can put the whole thing into perspective and make it clear that this is not just an accident where Henry happened to jump at the chance at the last minute to zip over to Peking. The press will try to give Kissinger the credit in order to screw the President, and they will try to say that the President had nothing to do with it, and Henry's argument is that he can shoot that down. Second, the text of his backgrounder would be reproduced and distributed to embassies, and so forth, which would provide guidance and a talking paper to them, and we could also send it to Chou En-lai so that he would have a confirmation of how we're handling the thing here. President raised, at this point, the question of an alternative, which would be just a guidance paper that could be issued, but Henry made the point, that made it too formal. Henry's third point is that, at such a backgrounder, they'll certainly ask him about Vietnam and Le Duc Tho, and he can handle that by leaving the impression that something's going on, but not saying anything. He'll go back to what we've always said. He'll give none of the substance, and thus he can build the mystery. President then asked Henry to outline the points that he would make in the backgrounder, and Henry never really got to that. He did say he'd make-- build up the fact that it was carefully planned over a long period of time. On substance, he would build mystery with authority, whereas Ziegler and Scali, and so on, couldn't do it with authority, and he'd give a little of the color of the meeting. President ended up in favor of the backgrounder, making the point that after that, Henry should set an absolute wall and see no one else, except a group of our friendly columnists, and we'll set up a dinner for them hosted by Scali on Monday night in Washington, as an off-the- record social event. President made the point that he must not see, on any basis, *The New York Times*, *Post*, CBS, except maybe NBC, except for maybe Chancellor. He is to draw a complete curtain there.

Then we got into the question of Rogers' speech in London, and in the middle of our discussion, Rogers called to say he was going to cancel his speech and instead have a press conference next week in Washington; so that worked out really much better. We agreed, however, that I should call him and get him to hold his press conference off until later in the week, not do it on Tuesday as he had planned. The-- I did this later today, and Rogers bought it completely.



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Getting back to the backgrounder, they-- the President made the point that Henry could bring up the Kansas City speech anecdote: that is that Chou En-lai was fully familiar with the content of it while Henry hadn't even received it since he had been on the road, and Chou En-lai loaned him his annotated copy. Then the point of this being the result of the President starting a long time ago, and he could cite the *Foreign Affairs* article, etc. He can make the point that on four different occasions the President and Kissinger worked on this in the Lincoln sitting room, emphasizing the long preparations that have gone into it, making the point that only the Secretary of State knew about this, plus Kissinger and the President. President specifically said we shouldn't even say that Haldeman knew about it, with which I fully concurred.

The President comes down in favor of the backgrounder, on the basis that we have to establish a framework in which to operate; otherwise, people are going to be running off in all different directions. And it's pretty hard to argue with that. We then got into some notification plans, question of when to tell Ziegler, and the President felt that we should not tell him, so that he can honestly say that he didn't know, and that after the broadcast he should say only that he will brief at 9:00 in the morning and that he'll have nothing to say until then. We're going to set up a plan to notify all the Washington staff that there's no comment in any way on this, the same with the Cabinet, etcetera. We'll make no calls, however, until after 8:00 tomorrow night. That is, 8:00 Washington time. The President still was worried about Henry's backgrounder as far as Rogers is concerned and ended up deciding not to tell Rogers, but that for me to call him on Friday morning and say Kissinger is going into Ron's briefing to give them some of the information on the thing—the purpose being to take the play away from himself just as he did on the SALT business. Then President decided that he'd like to go on out to dinner after the telecast tomorrow night; so he's going to have Ziegler, Ehrlichman, Kissinger, and me join him, and we'll go to Perino's.

End of July 14.