



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

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

Tuesday, January 25.

President was in the office this morning, spent quite a little time in just general conversation, since he had the speech pretty well wrapped up for tonight. He was concerned about a news summary report about a Sidey column saying that the President had too much access to television and other facilities, which made it hard for the other candidates. President's reaction was that we ought to explore the question of whether Sidey ever deplored Nixon's problem for eight years while he was out of office, when he traveled around the world alone with his briefcase, got no coverage, a lot less than even Scoop Jackson gets now, and did Sidey at that time complain about Kennedy dominating news? Did he argue for equal time for the Republicans? It's kind of curious to explore the double standard.

Kissinger was in for quite a while. We talked about the speech for tonight, making the point that we've got to realize that the press is going to kick us on Vietnam, not because they think we're wrong on what we're doing on this, but because they know we're right, and are furious because we're the ones who are doing it, the same way they did on Cambodia, and to an extent on China.

We reviewed also the question of possibility that-- or probability, really, that North Vietnam will create a real crisis in process of this. One of the reports said that while the President's in China, they might very well move to cut Vietnam in half and create a super crisis that we would have trouble dealing with. Henry made the point that this was quite possible and we had to figure that that could happen. Also, we've got to prepare a plan for our approach if the VC, or North Vietnam, turn down our peace offer, and we've got to go on the basis that we stick solidly with the position and don't waver at all. Attack our opponents and keep the heat on for consideration of our proposal. We have to establish the point that the President has done exactly what he said he would, and try to get this across somehow.

We had quite a thing with Laird regarding a *Washington Post* story this morning that quoted Pentagon officials and officers, in quite vehement criticism of the President's-- or the White House's orders on the bombing raids on North Vietnam. President told me to hit Laird on this,



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

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

saying we want to know who put it out, and establish the facts that the Joint Chiefs are the ones who wanted the three-- the five days, while the President originally ordered a three day bombing thing. The article said the White House insisted on five, which was not true, the Joint Chiefs did. Also, it said that White House has screwed up the target selection, whereas the White House had approved all of the targets from the Joint Chiefs. He also told me to call Moorer and make the point that the President has been standing up for the Chiefs and it's up to Tom to find out who did this, or we'll have to skewer the Chiefs from the White House.

I made both calls, got Laird mid-day, and Moorer this evening after he got back from a trip. Laird immediately joined me in complete indignation about the whole thing, said it was just terrible, and they'd checked it out, and that the *Post* reporter had gotten his stuff from military offices on the Joint Staff. And that he's just going to try and work something out. Then when I got to Moorer, he said that they had checked it very carefully and it was nobody on the Joint Chiefs, must have been somewhere else, so as usual they're all denying it and we get nowhere.

Haig reported, though, that he had a meeting with Laird shortly after that to review the speech with him, and apparently my phone call had shook Laird up quite a bit, and so it may have some value anyway. He also reported a rather alarming series of items that Laird dropped on him, saying that he had known about the secret meetings for some time, ever since we told Bill Rogers, because Bill had come right over and told him. And also he knew about the speech, because Bill had reviewed that with him, and had told him Saturday that he was going to do everything he could to kill the speech. Obviously, he didn't do anything, so there's some question as to whether the report's true, but it's one more item in the running battle.

We set up a series of Kissinger briefings this afternoon. Fortunately the first one was a staff meeting, and it didn't go well at all, because Henry started out with a long reiteration of all his negotiations and made the thing sound like a dismal defeat rather than a strong, positive move. It was lucky it was the staff, because he got considerable questions and criticism, as a result of



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

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

which we regrouped for an hour afterwards and worked out a totally different approach, which he then used with a State and Defense group, and hopefully with the press.

The speech itself went very well, and the President did an excellent job in his method as well as content of presentation. The phone reaction stuff afterwards was as good as any we've ever had, and I think we've probably scored at least a minor coup—maybe even a major one—in terms of public opinion and reaction.

End of January 25.