



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

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Monday, April 24.

At Camp David. The big item of the day was Kissinger's return. President had me over at 10:30 this morning for a couple hours. Talked about the plan for notification of people before the announcement of Kissinger's Moscow trip. The points to be made: wants to be sure we cover the Congressional hawks and that we get them all lined up, so that they're with us on this and don't come into the concern the President has on the-- as expressed in the memo he wrote to Kissinger on the 23rd, which is in my file. He wants to be sure that Haig doesn't let Laird tell the ARVN to let the press in, but we should work to get the PR out of Saigon, better as far as the battle reports. He concluded that Henry did mean to claim the SALT deal now, rather than waiting till the Summit, although Haig had said earlier that that's not what Henry had in mind. And the President feels we've got to drive Kissinger off of this point, that we shouldn't claim anything, until we get to the Summit, and the breakthrough should be tied to the President's meeting, not Kissinger's.

Rogers called, concerned that we'd be very sensitive about his participation in the conversations and so on, and to be sure to include him in the meetings, that he'd be glad to do anything we want him to do to help. He thinks there are some signs that the other side is hurting badly, and that we're in better shape than the press makes it appear. He does feel, however, that the Russians are doing to the President just what they did to LBJ on the standstill cease-fire, and that we shouldn't fall for that. Henry finally arrived about 8:30, and he and Haig and I met with the President over at Birch. The President had us gather first and then had me call and have him come over. He unfortunately had not zipped up his fly, so during the entire conversation it was noticeably open. We discussed the scenario for tomorrow, the plan for notification of the good guy Congressmen at 5:30. President backed down on the Kissinger briefing, and agreed that Henry could do one to steer the direction on how the talks were arranged and how they went, but with no substance or content. And also he backed down on the SALT thing and agreed that we would make the announcement. He's ordering Smith back right away to set up for that. The meeting went pretty well, although it was very tense at the beginning. The President was all primed to really whack Henry, but backed off when he actually got there. Henry obviously was very tense. Haig had



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called me earlier to say that Henry had sent some extremely bad cables because he felt we had not backed him, and he was very distressed that he had been sabotaged and undercut, and he greeted me very frostily, but the President broke that pretty quickly as the meeting started. We all came off in good spirits. President and Henry walked together over to the helipad and talked in loud voices all the way down, while Ed Cox sat listening avidly.

End of April 24.