



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

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Thursday, May 11.

Still going on reaction, got some pretty good positive stuff. Some concern now in our political group, on the potential problem of being charged with the Vietnam sellout. Rogers called me this morning and said he felt that he and Henry should talk to the President today or tomorrow to show that Rogers is not cut out because of the simple story that said Connally was the strong man in making the decision and all. Also he has to do the Business Council on Saturday and testify on Monday and Tuesday. He was thinking of having a press conference tomorrow on the response from the Soviets. We did have a message back from them that was much milder than was expected. They protested the blockade and all that sort of stuff, but didn't demand any action in any kind of way that concerned our people.

We set up the Rogers meeting. The President had me sit in and we didn't really accomplish much. The President told Rogers not to have a press conference this week, emphasize that we have to turn off all of our PR apparatus on any comment on the Soviet answer or any interpretation of the Soviet attitude. Rogers was concerned about the incidents at sea, negotiations with the Russians, and the President said to get some position papers to him. He got an extension—the Soviets have an ultimatum—we have to have a decision tonight before they extend it over the weekend. Regarding the Hill action, the President said we should put out a firm line this weekend: do nothing to weaken the possibility of winning; that is, don't do anything that'll cut South Vietnamese morale, so there should be no Congressional action until Monday, and we should discontinue any speculation that we would give in on a resolution, even if it were fairly favorable.

The general feeling now, even on Henry's part, is that the Summit is going to be on rather than off, and so there's a new level of optimism on that point. The general attack is going well, the President's mood seems to be very good, although he's tired. He left at about 4:30 after the Rogers meeting for Camp David with Bebe. He had him up last night to go out for dinner on the



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boat and to stay up over the weekend. Apparently he's going to stay up at Camp David, at least I assume so.

End of May 11.