



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

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Tuesday, February 20th. The President came up to South Carolina at noon today, and then, where I met him, and then back to DC Rogers called me this morning concerned, because he has to testify at Senate Foreign Relations tomorrow and then goes to Paris over the weekend, and needs to be phased in on the Kissinger reports and all of what's going on. He needs guidance on what to say, and maybe he can refer to the President's press conference. He's concerned that the conference in Paris will be tricky, and so on, so I reviewed this with the President on the plane on the way up, and also covered it with Henry when he got back.

The South Carolina visit went very well. Good crowds at the airport and along the streets, very enthusiastic, and it was a good move as far as getting some public acclaim for the peace move and all, and it sure made the trip worthwhile. The President gave a good talk, although not outstanding, at the State Legislature; made his points very well.

Henry--, or the President told me to spend some time with Henry. Let's see, going back to the South Carolina trip. He got into a review of it on the airplane, felt that it was well worthwhile, and that we need to do this to get some reaction from time to time through the country. And then he got into the Kissinger problem. I reviewed the cable that I had gotten from Henry about the President's press conference, Henry's China briefing, and all the concerns on that, and the President felt that I need to talk to Henry and get him off his.

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The President is concerned that Rogers has, that Kissinger has again lost his sense of proportion in it all, and told me to talk to Henry about Rogers. And make the point that he had invited him



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to breakfast tomorrow morning, which, incidentally, later got changed to the next day after Henry got back. And that Henry has to see Rogers today on Vietnam, make the point that Congress is not going to be concerned about China. The obsession here is on the aid to North Vietnam, which is the trouble with both the Left and the Right. We have to arm Bill with all possible arguments for that. I covered this with Henry when he got back. He was furious because his plane had been parked behind the President's plane, so that the press couldn't get a picture of him coming off, but I jumped on him on that, and he became much more tractable.

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Audio Cassette 31, Side A, Withdrawn Item Number 4 [AC-31(A) Sel 5]
Duration: 55 seconds

He's concerned primarily about China at this point. His meetings apparently went extremely well. He said that they are now the best friends we've got in the world. They're extremely anxious to build a solid working relationship, and he's very optimistic about what we can accomplish there, if we can avoid driving the Soviets up the wall in the process. He says that Mao seems to be in considerably better physical and mental shape. And, that he had not known a year ago whether he could trust the President or not, but has concluded as he's thought about it over the year that he can. And he obviously was very much impressed both with the President and his actions since the meeting last year.

The President also mentioned his concern that we have tough days ahead on the domestic side, because we have no Connally-type, the schmaltz who can sell our programs. Shultz, Cap, and Ash just don't have any of that. We got into the problem of Pat Hitt versus Balzano for the head of ACTION. The President has, doesn't want to get into the problem, but wants it resolved, so



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Ehrlichman and I had a couple hour meeting with Balzano this afternoon. And I think that helped to convince John that he would be a much better candidate for ACTION than Pat would be, and we have to get her to take the State Department job, which John is taking on himself now.

Then John and I had a long meeting this evening with John Dean on the whole Watergate question. Dean is very concerned, especially about the financial support aspects, but doesn't know how to handle his concern, and feels that we've got to get Mitchell into it and get some help from him.

End of February 20th.

An addendum on February 20th. The President said that, or Kissinger said that it was absolutely amazing in Hanoi to all of them, how remarkably precise the American bombing had been. There's virtually no destruction in the city of Hanoi of anything but military targets. The railroad yard is completely wiped out, the airports are completely wiped out, but all the other buildings and facilities still stand. Large storage areas have been demolished, but virtually nothing adjacent to them. And Henry feels that it's a really remarkable tribute to the bombing operation, and a total refutation of the attacks on the President for his so-called carpet bombing, etcetera.

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Audio Cassette 31, Side A, Withdrawn Item Number 7 [AC-31(A) Sel 6]
Duration: 1 minute 6 seconds



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On the meeting with Mao, he said, and all the Chinese, I guess, he said, they emphasize over and over the enormous importance of the US maintaining our troop strength in Europe, and our forces in Asia, etcetera. That in other words, the Chinese are super-concerned that we not pull back in our defensive posture vis-à-vis the Soviet Union. Obviously, they're very much concerned about the Soviets, the pressure on the Soviets being relieved and thus enabling them to focus on the China front.

The clear evidence is that the Chinese have determined that they can trust Nixon and that they have to tie with one of the two great powers in order to avoid their own destruction. And they've selected us as the more trustworthy choice.

[End of February 20, 1973]