



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

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Thursday, December 3

Covered the President's concerns regarding press contact and clearance through Ziegler. The ban on any political talk or analysis out of the White House and the point of proper conduct, avoiding contact with regulatory agencies, etcetera, except on the bri-- right circumstances. I covered all these with the senior staff this morning, and then set up a middle-level staff meeting this afternoon with all of my crew, went through the same thing. President got back into the question of the search for writers again, as he's finishing up the NAM speech. He had Kissinger in this morning, and we got into quite a discussion of what to do about the Thompson report—story—that State had leaked to Tad Shultz at the *New York Times*. President was furious about the leak, understandably, and substantially overreacted. He gave me orders to suspend the entire Vietnam working group at State, and include in that everyone who attended the Thompson briefing. When I called Irwin, I discovered that there hadn't been a Thompson briefing at State, even though Henry said there had. And Irwin didn't even know about the story. Rogers is still over at the NATO meeting.

That led into the leak on the story on Chile, which the President was also outraged by, and he told me to get Myers in in one hour and report who the Latin American section leak was on this one. I got all this going with Irwin, and then left to go to New York for a Kennedy Center Board meeting. President was a little distressed at my departure shortly after noon, but didn't raise any open objection.

There was a flap this morning in an awards ceremony at the White House wh-- when a girl who got a bravery award made some crack to the President about how she wouldn't think he was sincere about this until he ended the war in Vietnam. This, of course, drove him right up the wall. He called both Hoover and Kleindienst and jumped on them, since these awards were a Justice Department project.

He got back going on the PR thing again, making the point that the story we need to get across is boldness, guts, etcetera., rather than how well the machinery works. He's pretty much obsessed



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with the adverse reaction he had to Ehrlichman's report that he and Shultz had spent two hours with Bob Semple explaining how well the White House system is working. President feels the story we need to get out is what kind of a man he is, rather than the pitch on the machinery. He concludes we now have the image of a PR-oriented Administration, but we've totally failed in our real PR. We keep talking about how we make no mistakes and how we run things well, but we don't get across what kind of a man the President is. His warmth, the phone operators, that sort of thing. Also, we've missed in the foreign policy area where we had three major accomplishments: Cambodia, the Mid East, and the Vietnam speech. But we don't get across the courage, the independence, the boldness, standing alone, overruling advisors that go into this. He doesn't want a pitch Valenti-style, but he does want the personal idea of the President to come through. He uses the polls as the basis for concluding that none of it has.

After Henry went out, he got into a discussion of Rogers, and concluded that he may have to bite the bullet here.

Wants me to put a fully-documented case together, and sit down with Rogers and make it clear that State has broken its pick at the White House, and point out to him step-by-step why. I think he's basically concluded that he's not going to be able to keep Rogers on for much longer, and he's starting to build the case for removal. I was gone all afternoon, and stayed tonight in New York. Understand the President had a long session with Ehrlichman. I had no further contact.

End.