



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

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Friday, January 15.

Back in DC. The President was very concerned early this morning about the Nebraska coverage, primarily because the *New York Times* story, by Semple, implied that we had conceded we were wrong in earlier comments regarding students, etcetera. The President wanted to be sure that Ziegler and everyone else understood the basic rule that you don't capture people by surrendering to them, they capture you. It's extremely important that the leader never be in the position to allow the impression that he was wrong. He was quite concerned about this, but all of us, in reviewing the piece, agreed that it had really come out quite well and we didn't have the problem.

The Eisenhower Center dedication occupied a good chunk of the morning and it turned into one of our worst flaps as an advance operation, but ultimately it came out reasonably well. It did develop some concern on the President's part later in the day, as he wanted me to check to see if anybody had really gotten the point of what he had said at the dedication regarding the GOP being the Party of the "Open Door". As it turned out, nobody really had. The President followed up again, calling me at home tonight to see if Klein or anyone had picked this up. By then, of course, we had gotten them started working on it, but nobody had gone after it on his own initiative, which is the point the President was trying to make.

He got into another long discussion on PR, making the point that he wants me to put on one page, not a long memo, the basic PR objectives. What we're going to get across and how do we accomplish these objectives. Then he wants to really drop a load on the staff in getting the programs going, getting some enthusiasm projected. He's very concerned that we just don't have the staff tracking with enthusiasm. That we're missing a lot of points. He went back over November 3 and Cambodia again. The point that leadership, boldness, independence, that the President takes the risk to make the big decisions. He says our PR is not just bad, it's lousy. It's not a lack of effort, but a lack of focus and of intelligent direction. He thinks we missed the comeback story and so forth, too. He realizes it's hard to get people to say the kinds of things we should be saying, because it's not fashionable, but thinks it's essential that we do it. We did get



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into some analysis of politics, and he made the point that over this century all of the reelections were in good times or in war, and that we have a problem because we've got to get the times back to being good, and we have a lot of other things going against us in terms of race, students, etcetera.

The big deal of the day today didn't involve the President, but rather Kissinger, who got into his usual tirade against State and Defense at the staff meeting this morning. And I hit back at him on the point that he had created some problems himself, by the failure to notify Rogers of his last meeting with Dobrynin. That upset him. He packed up his papers and left the meeting. He came back about ten minutes later and asked Klein to leave so that he could talk to the four of us: Fin-Rumsfeld, Shultz, Ehrlichman, and me. He then said that he had to make his decision of going back to Harvard in the next day or so, and that, if this wasn't straightened out, he was going to go back and not stay here. He was more uptight than he usually is on the subject, and this was the first time he had raised it with the group, although he's been discussing his problems with Ehrlichman during this past week in California, while I was away, and has John quite disturbed. Although, it's basically the same routine over again. As a result, John and I met with him briefly a little later in the morning and agreed that something had to be done in the way of a showdown with the President on the whole subject, but that it should not be done until after the State of the Union. This successfully stalls Henry past the time of his return to Harvard, which I don't think he has any intention of doing anyway, and commits us to working with him at that time to get the program worked out and hit the President on the whole Kissinger-Rogers situation. The President has gone to Camp David for the weekend. I'm staying home.

End of January 15.