



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

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Thursday, January 21.

The President spent the whole day at the EOB working on the speech. He got into the *Life* editorial again today, as apparently Henry got into a discussion of it with him. He wanted some follow-up on who the *Life* guys had talked with. It turned out to be only Kissinger and Ehrlichman. He wanted to put a complete freeze on *Time-Life* for a while. Also wants an analysis of what *Time* has done since December 1st versus *Newsweek*, and so on. He's extremely disturbed by this whole thing. He wants to get a hold of Keogh and Shepley and analyze with them, and also Hobe Lewis, the question of how we should handle our battle with *Life*. He thinks it's really a problem for us, and that we ought to, for instance, at least cut Sidey off and probably cut off the whole *Time* and *Life* group.

He reacted at first quite indifferently to news of Teddy Kennedy's defeat as Majority Whip in the Senate, and said he didn't think it would have the significance that the commentators would probably try to give it. He made the point that you don't kill a man who's been built up the way Teddy has, by a defeat, any more than you killed Nixon by his defeat in California. He thinks it will provide a momentary setback, but that Teddy will move ahead in spite of it, with considerable strength.

We had a new Rogers-Kissinger flap today regarding Laos, as Henry came in this morning to say he had discovered that Rogers and Laird had met secretly with Alexis Johnson yesterday, and had decided to send a cable to our Ambassador as an attempt to try to turn off the planned Laotian operations. Alex Johnson felt so guilty about it, he ended up calling Henry and telling him; and we put out an all-points bulletin to make sure that the cable didn't get to the President, since Rogers had said that he was not going to send the cable in through the system, but would get it cleared directly with the President. We had everything covered, but in spite of that, the President got the cable. We later found out Rose Woods had taken it to him because Rogers' secretary had called her and said that they were sending this over in a sealed envelope marked "EYES ONLY", and it was to be delivered directly to the President, not through any individual



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or department. So Rose did it. As soon as the President opened it, he reacted exactly as he should have, and called Henry over, said the President would not approve this, and that it was up to Henry to handle it through his system. This, of course, delighted Henry and probably turned out to be the best thing that could have happened; but I'm sure that's not what Rogers had intended. Henry took the matter to the WSAG meeting and brought it up there, as the President had told him to, and as should have been done to begin with. Before the President called Henry over, however, he—he Henry—had been in my office highly upset about the whole business; and later, he said he thought I had probably briefed the President on how to handle it if it did come in, which, of course, I had not done because I thought we had set it up so it wouldn't get in to begin with. The President talked with me about it a little later, and was really quite disturbed that Rogers had pulled this; and he still doesn't know about the maneuver of slipping it in through the secretaries, which I will now have to cover with him so we have a chance, really, to jump on this.

We got word today that we also got a follow-up opportunity on *Newsweek's* lousy article this week. *Life* is letting George Romney to do a two page editorial to counter theirs. *Newsweek* will let Elliot Richardson do a similar kind of thing; so we're busily getting those written now. The President is just extremely pleased by that development and said tonight on the phone that he wanted to get a little medal developed for the guys who perform beyond the call of duty in this way, find some kind of little thing to give them as a token of the President's appreciation.

Richard Russell died today, but the Senate and House leadership agreed that they should go ahead with the plans for the State of the Union tomorrow night anyway. The funeral will be in Georgia on Sunday, and the President wants to go down; so we'll have to work something out vis-à-vis the White House Church services that day.

The President seems to be reasonably pleased with the speech as it's developing. He's on the basis of about two drafts a day now; he goes over them quite thoroughly, gives them back to Ray and makes Ray go to work on them. In the meanwhile, the President deals with his other business, which is a much less taxing way of dealing with the speech than the super-agonizing



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he's done in the past, although he's still putting a lot more into these than he probably should be. The State of the Union, of course, is an exception to the rule in any event. He has decided he's getting kind of tired and wants to head for Florida the weekend after next; and so we're setting that up.

End of January 21.