



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

National Archives and Records Administration, Online Public Access Catalog Identifier: 7787364

Tuesday, October 14.

Pre-Moratorium Day. President had leaders meeting this morning - main thrust on tactics for follow-up of message about reforms and priorities, plus Haynsworth (had Mollenhoff in to put the screws on).

Big deal for the day was arrival of intelligence bulletin at noon reporting release of a letter by North Vietnamese Prime Minister Phan Van Dong to American people in support of Moratorium, in very flowery red rhetoric. Kissinger called me and said thought we should get it out. I agreed and we started a hectic process of deciding how, by whom, etc.

Harlow argued for a Presidential TV appearance to say Hanoi was wrong and that Moratorium Day demonstrators were not trying to aid the enemy, but rather to express desire for peace. Kissinger strongly opposed this, wants no involvement of President. Ehrlichman mainly agreed, feels President is positioned right as a result of the college letter Sunday. President decided he would not get into it, but wanted VP to take it on, to get maximum possible coverage. So we set him up, had Buchanan do a statement, frantically got him into a review with President, and barely got before the cameras in time for the evening news. Also cranked up great Congressional action and even some commentators. Result was we got the coverage, question now is whether it helps or hurts. Point is to try to make the innocents see they are being used, and to blunt the effect of tomorrow. Hard to do much because momentum is tremendous and broad-based.

President had lot of ideas about how to approach. I took the letter in to him while we were working on recommendation and by the time we were ready, he was full of suggestions. Swing at once to hard line, did not want to take it on himself, but did want to use it and saw value for us. He feels now very strongly that the de-escalation has not helped us at all strategically - and only a little bit and for a short while domestically. Is convinced as a matter of basic principle that concessions do no good.



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Some more concern about keeping Kissinger's morale and spirits up. President realizes a lot is read into what people think Kissinger believes, and he must maintain air of confidence.

He has decided for November 3 he has to stay with the present hard line. No more concessions. In the meantime everything has to be consistent. But Kissinger can't get Rogers to agree to keep quiet, and Rogers has Laird unhooked too.

Eisenhower dinner - with Reagan as speaker - cutting loose on students.