



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

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

Wednesday, April 29.

Speech preparation day. No schedule. Started by giving Ziegler a rundown on how to handle press for the day. The story of last night's attack didn't break until a Thieu announcement at 9:30. Then speculation built fast, and Defense released their prepared statement. President told Ziegler to continue to lead speculation down the path that we are considering Cambodia's aid request. Wants a planted story that he will ask \$35 million aid. Say the troop movement has no relation to Lon Nol request - just another border action only bigger. Then say President will discuss entire situation on TV tomorrow. Set timing of procedure for tomorrow night - Congressional, Cabinet, staff, press briefings, advance calls to Reagan and Rocky, etc.

Then had Ehrlichman and Flanigan in for a review of economy and their stock market meeting. Agreed we needed to get a briefer up to Wall Street to calm their fears after the TV. Then Kissinger and Ziegler back in for more briefing instructions - based on adverse Senatorial reaction, especially Mansfield. Then worked out what he wanted for TV map setup, etc. Then sat back and relaxed with Kissinger and me. Reviewed DDE's Lebanon decision and JFK's Cuban missile crisis. Decided this was tougher than either of those - especially since it didn't have to be made. But President is convinced it had to be this now - or get out now - no chance to go along the same path. All this ran till about 1:00. I was in for three and a half hours. Then he went to EOB to work on speech - stayed all afternoon and into evening.

Called me, to have Bebe come up to be with family, and have Rose get Julie and David home, away from campus problems. Called again to discuss problem of locating his new pool table. Decided it won't fit in solarium, so wants a room in EOB. Absolutely astonishing he could get into trivia on brink of biggest step he's taken so far. Thinks speech is coming along well, as does Rose. Usual problem of trying to get it short enough - he only wants ten minutes. But he has a lot to say.

Said to have everyone go home and get a good rest, except for Rose, Kissinger, and Buchanan and President.



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

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

Had a session with Ehrlichman this afternoon about probable violence at Yale this weekend. Debate whether to send troops up on standby. Ehrlichman and I oppose on grounds it will only incite them and we'll be accused of repression. Mitchell and Kleindienst are determined to go ahead, on grounds that will take 14 hours lead and potential for damages is too great to ignore. Will settle tomorrow.

Wednesday, April 29 – cont.

Interesting sidelight on today. First Mitchell called, very concerned regarding enormous "anti" reaction in Senate, etc. Then Kissinger called - convinced there was something amiss. Had reviewed the facts of the day, and makes a pretty good case.

Haig told him at 9:00 something was fishy, because of Laird's reaction when Kissinger called him at 8:00 to try to get him to stop Thieu's announcement, since story wasn't building and there was no need to say anything yet. Laird said he probably couldn't stop it and anyway something would break on the Hill at 10:30, but maybe can delay an hour or so. Kissinger argued for delay until evening, since it was then night time in Vietnam.

Then in our meeting with President, point was made that whole focus was on aid to Cambodia, not troop movement. Then Thieu's statement broke and all hell instantly busted loose on Hill - Fulbright first. Then Defense statement - instantly followed by Cooper-Aiken-Mansfield-Church press conference - which they were all ready for. And they hit totally on troops, not on aid which is what they expected, and opposed.

No one from the Hill called either Kissinger or Harlow, and hardly anyone from press. Normally they'd both be flooded.

Seriously appears that Laird and Rogers may have tipped this all off - in hopes that violent reaction would dissuade President from going ahead with Phase II. Appears they know about Phase II, otherwise they'd be opposing aid as next probable step, instead of troops. Also State and Defense did nothing during the day to defend Phase I.



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

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

This is Kissinger's thesis. Also feels it may backfire, as do I. Because this has now drawn all their fire and makes the big move tomorrow anticlimactic, and sure builds the audience for it. Odd thing is that these border raids have been going on for some time and this is bigger, but not worthy of this major blast. In earlier debate Rogers and Laird both said we could do Parrot's Beak with no trouble - COSVN was big problem. Now Parrot's Beak has busted Hill wide open. Will be a tough couple of days.