



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

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Tuesday, September 14.

President started the day with a Republican leadership meeting to which he had added ranking members of the committees concerned with the economic program, thinking that would add a little more enthusiasm and pep things up. Apparently it didn't, because after the meeting, he hit again the fact that he'd never seen anyone in the leadership meeting, including our own staff people, who will lead any cheers, who will take the initiative, or anything else, and that he's sick of them. This seems to be the attitude after virtually every such meeting. The problem being that they just don't have any fire and don't respond. He also met with the farmers group to get their views on the economic program. Apparently that went reasonably well, at least he didn't have any particular comments on it.

Henry got back from Paris last night and reported to the President. Came in, saw me this morning, to run over the plans. The North Vietnamese have closed off the negotiations in effect, because of the screw-up on Thieu's election. At least that's Henry's view, and he in turn has basically turned off the talks. He now wants to go to Moscow and work the same kind of a deal there, or at least make the record for it, so that when we do the pull out in January, we'll have that as a final wrap-up attempt to settle by negotiation. His logic is that if we're going to pull out anyway, we might as well try to get all the mileage out of it that we can.

Apparently his meeting with the Chinese went pretty well. They were horrified, however, at his information that the press corps traveling with us would be a minimum of 150 people. He didn't even raise the question of the ground station, which would take another 100 people. I'm convinced, incidentally, from a memo I got from Scali, that we should try to press for the ground station if we can possibly get it, so that we can have live coverage of our morning activities in Peking. The Chinese did not go along with Henry's plan to announce his trip and the date of the President's trip on September 21. Instead, they want to wait until October to announce Henry's trip, and they want to wait until after Henry's trip to announce the date of the President's trip, so



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they'll have some substantive reason for Henry making the trip. I don't see any problem with this, and I don't think Henry does either, so we'll probably go ahead on that basis.

The President called me at home tonight and said that in his long talk with Henry this afternoon, Henry had brought up the fact that Reston was in to see him, or that Henry had talked to Reston, and that Reston had asked for an interview with the President. Henry was actually raising this with the President. It's completely incredible, because several weeks ago, in the President's office, Reston's stories came out and the President then made the point loud, clear, and solidly to Henry that under no circumstances would he see Reston at any time, ever, and that Henry was not to see him at all, that we knew he would be coming around trying to get an interview when he got back to Washington, but that he was to be flatly turned down. And then next thing we know, Henry's back and is talking with him. So I've got to hit him on that tomorrow. He also raised with me again the need to get going on finding a new Secretary of Agriculture to replace Hardin, who leaves November 1.

End of September 14.