



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

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Wednesday, April 19.

Back to the Connally problem this morning. I couldn't get to him because he was involved, so I ended up seeing him this afternoon for yet another hour meeting. I had spent a long time with the President this morning on the strategy for handling Connally, and he wanted me to sell him on waiting until May 15 to go. He's concerned about the reason for leaving, which Connally will give in his statement. He wants to be sure that Connally expresses his support of the President and his policies so that there's no question of a rift of that kind. First, the President told me to tell him about the Kissinger trip, then we agreed later not to do that so I held off. I-- The meeting with Connally was very good, he agreed to the date, he agreed that the reason would be the basic truth, that he had only committed to come for a year, that he stayed longer to get things finished up, and now it was time for him to leave and he was going to go. He assured me that he will not get back into Democratic politics, would not, could not possibly support any of the Democratic candidates, and will support the President and say so. He was in pretty good spirits, although I think maybe he's beginning to wonder if he's doing the right things, but I think he's worried about the health problem more than even he realizes.

We got deeply into the Kissinger trip question, because I raised the point this morning that I didn't think the Camp David cover was satisfactory and I urged some other alternatives, such as our going to Florida and saying Kissinger was at Camp David or something, but the President doesn't want to go to Florida and we ended up back with the Camp David deal. The problem then was how to notify Rogers and we spent considerable time during the day on that. Ended up deciding that Haig and I should tell him first thing tomorrow morning, but then I recommended that we do it tonight after having dinner with the President on the *Sequoia*.

The President agreed, so Al and I went out to Rogers' house at 9:00 and gave him the basic line that we had heard from Brezhnev in a secret message that he wanted to meet with the President's representative for a secret talk on Vietnam in Moscow and that Henry was on his way. Bill took



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it extremely well, we didn't have any problem at all with him, which was kind of a surprise. So that worked out far better than we had expected.

The *Sequoia* dinner with Haig was partly a report on Vietnam and partly the President blasting the press and our enemies in Vietnam. Haig told us about a report-- about how reporters had been working on the young soldiers, saying they won't take you in helicopters because they're going to land you in a mined area and they're afraid they're going to blow up their helicopters. They don't care what happens to you, but they do worry about their helicopters. So they're sending you up in buses. That's when the officers had to talk the guys into going because they were starting to more or less mutiny and he referred to them as you "press bastards", you're the ones that caused all this. The President wants Agnew to use that in his speech on Friday.

He also had some other ideas for attack and counterattack, did quite a little pretty potent ranting and raving about the press primarily. Haig seems to feel things are going quite well in Vietnam, and the President's air attacks, particularly the bombing of Haiphong and Hanoi were tremendous morale boosters, both for the Vietnamese and for our troops that are left.

On the Kleindienst hearings, we stalled most of the day but they finally put Gleason on. He was on the stand for three hours but didn't say anything very harmful, so all of the worry was for naught. Tomorrow is Flanigan and then they wrap it up, theoretically at least.

Shultz sent out a memo pushing for his budget meeting that he had asked for earlier. The President told me to have Ehrlichman cover the whole thing with him making the point that we're to kill HR 1 anyway, so he doesn't need to worry about the costs there, but on Defense we can't make any decisions on cuts now before Moscow. That depends on future events and that maybe we can make some cuts afterwards. On revenue sharing he thinks that can be killed, too, but in a clever way. We can't go out and say so. He wants Ehrlichman and Shultz to work this out rather than the President having to do it. He thinks Connally and the President should meet on the budget first and then after the Texas trip he'll meet with Shultz and the group.



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End of April 19.