



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

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Thursday, October 12th. The President had me in this morning before we took off for Atlanta. He's concerned again about the voter telegram, because of the charges we may get on the money spent and who pays for it, and the assumption that the President sent it at government expense. So he wants printed on the bottom of the back that this message is paid for by the Committee to Reelect the President. He had a lot of attack ideas; he wants to attack the press on the double standard, the violent demonstrations at the Republican Convention, pierced times, and so on, the flyers sent out for the Berkeley demonstration, thousands of dollars of damage in San Francisco, obscenities at the Statue of Liberty, Tricia at Columbus Day. Why haven't the press picked this up? Also on McGovern's Vietnam speech...

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Audio Cassette 25, Side B, Withdrawn Item Number 5 [AC-25(B) Sel 3]  
Duration: 19 seconds

...we should get out the line the Thais say, we should get the Thais to say that we would, that they won't accept a residual force, if we pull out of Vietnam. They should say this now before the League of Families meets.

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He got into a schedule change, decided he'd like to do an hour TV deal in Chicago after the motorcade, that would be with four or five press people from the Chicago press, so this would take place of a press conference. I suggested we stay overnight in Chicago, do this the next day, then go to Denver late in the afternoon, which would really work out better.



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Atlanta worked out very well. We had a huge crowd, and great confetti, and color, and so forth, but it just somehow didn't have the spark of super enthusiasm that you sometimes get and sometimes don't. I don't think we did anything wrong, but that was very definitely my feeling, and I think it was his. Although, we got very good press coverage and reaction on it, and it was extremely successful overall.

Henry and Haig got back from Paris and had dinner with the President at 7:00. I went home from the airport, got a call at home saying the President wanted me at the dinner, so I drove back in to the White House. We met at 6:45 in the EOB office Colson there at the time and the President went over some odds and ends with Chuck on reaction to today, then Kissinger and Haig arrived, and Chuck left. We sat in the inner office, and as soon as Chuck went out the door, Kissinger opened by saying, well, you've got three for three, Mr. President. The President was sitting over in his easy chair; Kissinger, Haig and I were sitting at the table. The President was a little incredulous at first, and sort of queried Henry a bit. Henry started to outline the agreement from the, his secret red folder, made the point overall that we got a much better deal by far than we had expected. There are...

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Duration: 6 seconds

...still five items to negotiate...

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...but, Kissinger's convinced that he can do this. The net effect is that it leaves Thieu in office.  
We get a stand-in-place cease-fire on October 30 or 31.

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Audio Cassette 25, Side B, Withdrawn Item Number 6 [AC-25(B) Sel 4-2]  
Duration: 9 seconds

They permit the South Vietnamese to hold the prisoners in jail.

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They have to agree to work together to set up a Council of International, or National Concord and Reconciliation, but any action by this council has to be by unanimous vote, so it can't effectively hurt Thieu any. The cease-fire would be followed by a complete withdrawal of troops within 60 days and a return of the POW's in 60 days, so we'd have everything done by the end of the year. He then said that North Vietnam, one of the agreements is that we'd provide an economic aid program...

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Duration: 2 seconds

...for five years.

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The President interjected at that point, said this is the most significant thing of all, because it's a collapse of Communist principle. They've always refused to accept that kind of aid because it admits the failure of their system: this gives us the leverage on them. China refused any discussion of it, and so on. The President kept interrupting Henry all through the discussion. He obviously was all cranked up and wasn't really listening to the details. He commented on the problems leading up to this agreement, the significance of China, the bombing and mining and his usual litany, kidding Henry some, referring to Haig a great deal, and asking if he really was satisfied with the deal, because he had been basically opposed to it last week, because he thought we were screwing Thieu. Now he thinks it's okay, but he is concerned about whether we can sell Thieu on it. I asked him after the meeting, though, whether he really honestly felt it was a good deal, and he says he does think it is. Henry kept trying to plow through his folder and all the details, the President kept interrupting, on the, for instance the point of how we handle this with Rogers. There was some discussion of that, and then back to details. The plan will be for Henry to go to Paris next Tuesday, then to Saigon, then for him to work it out with Thieu. He'll spend three days there, then up to Hanoi, then back to Saigon to report to Thieu, and then back to here and we make the deal. The President interjected that Haig must go with you. Henry said no, we need him here to deal with the bureaucracy, and all. The President said well, someone's got to go. He suggested me. I felt I should not. Kissinger said no, it would raise too much anticipation, if it were known that I was going, and also I'm needed here to hold things down.

We then went into dinner in the outer office. The President told Manalo to bring the good wine, his '57 Lafite Rothschild, or whatever it is, to be served to everyone. Usually it's just served to the President, and the rest of us have some California Beaulieu Vineyard stuff. The discussion continued along the same line, then the President toasted us all. The decision was to handle Rogers at breakfast tomorrow, and that I'm to be there to tell him that we had a significant breakthrough on the military side, but that Kissinger has to go back to Paris next week to try to finish up the political part of it. If he gets it worked out, he'll then go to Saigon to go over it with



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Thieu. We won't tell him about Hanoi or the fact that the whole schedule is set now, with the President making the announcement on October 26 for the October 30 cease-fire.

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Audio Cassette 25, Side B, Withdrawn Item Number 8 [AC-25(B) Sel 5]  
Duration: 16 seconds

The President keeps misstating the tactics with Rogers, saying that Henry will go to Saigon to force this down Thieu's throat. Henry and I keep correcting him, making the point that he's going to discuss it with Thieu.

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Kissinger wants to be sure there's no responsibilities assigned to Rogers, because he'll try to parlay them at the State Department. Instead, let Henry line up Bill Sullivan, so that he's Henry's man and that he'll take Sullivan with him. Also, he wants to handle Alex Johnson, playing to the idea that the future of the Foreign Service depends on Johnson's cooperation on this with the President. He feels that this will keep Rogers in line and should work out all right. Then the ultimate payoff for Rogers is that he gets to go to Paris and sign the cease-fire with the Vietnamese foreign minister on October 30 and that takes effect when they sign it.

We went around the details some more. The real basic problem boils down to the question of whether Thieu can be sold on it...

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Duration: 10 seconds

...and if he doesn't buy it, there's no option but to flush him, because we can't turn down the offer: we're trapped now...

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...it's too good to turn down and get away with it in this country, because they'd release it. The President is obviously really cranked up with the whole thing. Kissinger reported on the very high emotional level of the talks and the fact that at the end of 16 hours, no I guess it was 14 hours of talks yesterday, that Le Duc Tho remarked to him that the two of them had been negotiating on this for four years now, but they'd had some very tough times on each other and all that; but now we both had sought the same thing, which was to make peace and today we have made peace.

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Duration: 10 seconds

He then started crying, and shook hands with Henry. The other Vietnamese also cried.

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Henry said that on the question of when we stop the bombing, which, of course, we have to do a few days before the announcement.



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Duration: 30 seconds

They changed the date of the announcement three days after they had established a date for stopping the bombing three days earlier. And, Tho referred to something about that. And Henry said, well, of course we have to continue bombing for three days more then, which he said Tro--, Tho accepted, but in a very trembling fashion. The real point is that they're really screwing the Vietcong because they're keeping their people prisoner and basically selling them out.

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Haig feels that the reason they're doing this is that they've basically given up. They have no more hope, and they're now going to try and establish friendship with us, which is what they say they want just like our China relationship. Overall, it boils down to a super-historic night if it all holds together, and Henry now is convinced it will. He thinks that he's really got the deal, so we'll see.

End of October 12th.