



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

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

Sunday, January 7th. I got to Camp David at 10:00 and met with the President for four hours at Birch. It broke up at 2:00, and I went on back home while he stayed up till later in the afternoon. His primary concern was the whole attack and PR operation, which he feels is now dismantled and that we have nothing to work with. He says he's been talking to Colson about it, and asked him to do a memo on what ought to be done. But he now feels that we face a partisan situation right from the beginning of Congress, as evidenced by their approach on Vietnam. Whereas we thought we would have a better relationship, at least at the start, because of the landslide election victory. He feels that even though we get minimum results from our Congressional effort, along the line that I've told him, Colson and Buchanan feel that we spend too much effort and get no real results because we send out so much stuff, but he feels that it's worth any effort to get any result, and that we can't let Congress hear only the Washington Press and get only the anti-Administration mail that comes in. He super-emphasizes the importance of Colson's letters and pressures on Congress operations. And then he points out that on the domestic side the substantive men, particularly Ehrlichman, don't assume their responsibility to sell, counterattack, and fight: for example, the fight on the budget, reorganization, executive privilege, and so on. They shouldn't say what Ziegler and Baroody and so on do about it, they should get up and do it themselves. He's concerned that we didn't have Scali, Clawson, or Klein at the Congressional breakfast, and therefore, there was no one to follow-up on the operational side there. Of course, Colson wasn't there either. He doesn't believe we can simply have Ziegler in charge of the press, because he can't develop the offensive and defensive lines and the attack, and, therefore, maybe we ought to pull Clawson out of the Ziegler operation, use him to attack, rather than just a service. He feels Timmons is a problem, because he never thinks in terms of strategy, he's just a journeyman operator, as is Ziegler, although Ziegler is a substantially better one. With the battle lines drawn, the Democrats taking the partisan attack, and the Republicans needing to be shored up, we should have used Scali more effectively, for example on the Vietnam thing. The problem he feels is that we all breathed a sigh of relief after the campaign, and then sat down at Camp David to start reorganizing the government—now we're paying the price. First we didn't get the respite that we needed, and a new charge; and second, we assumed Congress would have a



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different attitude and they don't. Even without the bombing, Congress would have been rough such as Mansfield's approach on Watergate today. Therefore, we have to have a new attack organization directed at the top, such as the Colson group that met daily during the campaign. Someone has to be chairman and in charge. Ziegler, Ehrlichman, and so on have to carry it out, but it's become apparent that we need this. He feels we've got to move Baroody in quickly to start taking over the Colson thing, but that also I have to sit down with Colson and make up a new plan and so on on the approach on this. That Clawson should be put in the attack group, and he wants to be sure that Ziegler talks to Colson, or I mean Clawson and keeps him in touch on things.

He feels that Timmons has got to develop, or that Ehrlichman has got to develop the responsibility to sit down with Baroody, Timmons, and so on, and ride them like Colson does now, and at least get someone to do it. Also, we've got to look at my role in this. Timmons has got to start to follow the others in developing an approach to an attack, and that we need, on a political basis, to think in terms of individuals for building a new establishment. For example, on Congress, he had to do the Mansfield and Albert things at the outset, but we should shift away now from the leaders to working with our friends and deal with those who will help us. We have to develop tactics to deal with this. The Cabinet and all have to know who to deal with; we've got to set up social events for our people, and develop our own social lions, not just Kissinger. I need to develop a plan for him for this, and a schedule plan that reflects it also, for the next few months. On Congress, we can't just ask the leaders to speak up for us. We got to work with the loyalists, and don't try to get so many people; we should rifle shot it more.

The President also got into some discussion of his Kissinger concerns again. He made the point that Haig has got to fill Scowcroft in completely and totally level with him on the Kissinger problem, so he knows how to go at this. And then he raised his concern about the Kissinger



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papers, and all the President's papers on national security that Kissinger is holding, including Henry's phone calls, and conversation memos, and cables, and so on which he wants to be sure we get a hold of and stay on top of as much as possible. He wants me to talk to Henry about Ambassador to Germany. He now thinks that Eberle should go, although he's willing to leave Hillenbrand until fall as the personnel people have recommended, but he wants to find out what Henry's view is on that, before we do anything.

We talked about the Petersen problem and the question of whether he should do the trip. The President thinks that he still should, even though Henry now says that we can't let him go, because of the stuff that he's been quoted on in the papers, and so on. That lead into Vietnam, and the President reviewed our position pretty thoroughly on an historical basis and the current situation.

DECLASSIFIED - E.O. 13526, Sect. 3.4: by MS, NARA, June 12, 2013
Audio Cassette 29, Side A, Withdrawn Item Number 13 [AC 29(A) Sel 10]
Duration: 1 minute 23 seconds

The point being, that if we get the settlement now we're in good shape, and we'll ram it down Thieu's throat. If Thieu doesn't accept it, then we sign anyway and tell him to do what he wants. But if we don't get the settlement, then we've got to go to option two, and that being the basically go it alone idea. The way the President sees handling that would be to say that Thieu has informed us that he can take over. That Vietnamization is done, that we'll help them with aid and so forth, but now we'll withdraw all American troops, and stop all our military action in 45 days if our POW's are returned.



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The big hang up on that still is the question of whether the North Vietnamese will go along with it. But it goes back to Kissinger's problem and the fact that we really had no option on December 18th, and Haig had confirmed this to him because we had no cards left to play. The only way we can make an agreement was if Thieu went along with us and, and he wouldn't. Now we're in a different position and can force the agreement if North Vietnam will take it without Thieu.

He got into some of the points of staffing my operations. He wants me to give Bull the responsibility for handling the schedule stuff with the President, all the details, and so forth, and I work on the weekly, general plan. He wants to release me for PR and attack responsibilities, but feels that I have got to pull the staff together for staff meetings. Stiffen their backs, lead the attack, such as the relations with Brock and Bush and Brown, where I, we should have meetings frequently with them. On the new majority, we should keep building that. Develop from Kendall the business loyalists; from Colson, the labor loyalists; Ziegler, the media people, also religious, educational, youth, and so on. He thinks, still, that I need to get a deputy for myself, with maturity, presence, who can act in my place. And that I have to clear time to spend on the new establishment, with the Republicans, the financial people, and so forth. Which ones are the real leaders, and how do we build them up? He keeps talking about when I get more free, these are the things that I ought to be doing. He wants me to develop a plan on this, and also to get the candidate search going quickly on the political side.

I got into the Congressional approach, and the need to start developing Congressional loyalists, both Democrat and Republican. Determine which ones we want to develop, but particularly including Bush, Brock, and Brown on this planning, along the same lines as the other new majority type development. On the dinners and other events here, he wants to be sure that we don't just have the Congressional leaders, but that we build the thing on our friends. He makes



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the point that Moss going on TV about the Friday morning breakfast is a perfect excuse about why we don't consult Congress, because he broke the rule, and then he, by talking at all, and then he distorted the thing totally. Because the President said that he was neither optimistic nor pessimistic, and Moss goes on and says the President says he's not optimistic regarding the talks, which of course, distorts it. He feels that we shouldn't just ask the leaders in Congress to speak up for us, that we should work just with our loyalists and don't try to get so many. Rifle shot it more, and get the ones that will do something, working on any particular thing instead of trying to cover everybody.

On schedule, he says now he wants to plan the schedule so that we cover the foreign policy needs, domestic needs—like Quadriad, Shultz and Cabinet, leaders in Congress generally, and then outside groups. Work out an overall plan that covers all of those. He says he'll see Connally after the Inauguration, but before the Inauguration, he wants one minor event every day, or an hour of a minor events from 11:30 to 12:30, to work in anything, questions he needs to cover on a fifteen-minute, per-appointment basis. He wants to follow this plan of taking an hour a day for getting people in, including Congressmen and outside people, as a way to keep the President in touch with the new majority, not just the leaders. On the master planning, he wants to be sure to get the foreign stuff under control early. On that approach, Heath gets Camp David and the whole state visit deal. And then he agreed with my recommendation to go ahead with the Jewish dinner for Golda Meir, including a few gentiles, like Connally, and so, and only the cream of those who are with us. He doesn't want to have state dinners where we can possibly, avoid it otherwise. He wants to put the diplomatic reception on the back burner for now, maybe do it in the fall, or not till next year. He says he'll go to Florida at the end of this week, if Kissinger comes back, and he'll stay there until the Inaugural, if he can.



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Then got into quite a thing on the press approach; he want's Ziegler to be sure that someone other than Julie has to handle the press bitching on the East Wing side. He's concerned that Helen Smith is too soft, but we need to know who can do it. And Mrs. Nixon thinks that we ought to keep Connie Stuart for a while in order to handle this problem, which I think is a bad idea, but we have to figure a way to talk him out of it. I told him that I thought the social coverage boycott on the *Post* was backfiring on us now, and he said to tell Ziegler that he should not build too big a battle regarding the *Post*, maybe we should let them all come in and work out some kind of an approach that would shift the thing. Especially he wants to be sure that Pat and Julie aren't bothered on it. We should just try to get less coverage from the *Post*; there's no sense in fighting on an inconsequential matter that looks as if we're being small. So we shouldn't make the jabs they give us any worse. Find other ways to fine the *Post* and the *Times* but let the women in. At first, he thought Ziegler ought to sit down with them, and then he said, no he shouldn't have a meeting, he'd just let both papers in now, and after the Inauguration, that is, when we have the first event, but then find other ways to keep the *Post* out, such as Ehrlichman and Shultz briefings, and so forth. If Pat Nixon has any events before the Inaugural, we ought to let the *Post* come to that. Also when we have publishers to the White House, for dinners and other affairs, we should never have the *Post* or the *Times*, only the *Star* and the *New York Daily News*, because we can't afford to signal to our friends that we're buttering up our enemies.

On the State of the Union, he now figures that he'll do a series of State of the Union segments to the Congress. He was originally saying five, but even now is considering more than that. But he wants each one of them written for radio delivery by the President, and then 150 word pullout for a 90 second television summary of it. The idea would be to do one of these maybe twice a week for the first three or four weeks.



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We had some discussion about Watergate, and I filled him in on all the coverage in the paper on that today, and the fact that it's building up. He feels that our people should take the Fifth Amendment rather than getting trapped into testifying.

Deed of Gift - Privacy withdrawal re-reviewed and released by MS, NARA, October 21, 2013
Audio Cassette 29, Side A, Withdrawn Item Number 15
Duration: 20 seconds

I also raised the Webster problem with him and the fact that he's been, with, non-paying his taxes in order to get the low interest loan in effect.

Also Meany's opposition to him. He told me to talk to Colson and hit it hard, that we can't take this with the nasty mood of the Congress; that the guy in that post has to be like Caesar's wife, and Webster won't quite make that.

End of January 7th.