



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

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Saturday, January 27.

At Key Biscayne. The President reviewed some of the editorials we sent in to him. He feels they still miss the point, as the Fairley book points out, of what can be done to build what the President does regardless of its actual merits. Kissinger, at Congress, didn't make the point and the whole thing has to do with the lasting effect, which is how it happened, regarding the character of the man-- how he toughed it through. We should quit worrying about defending the agreement; it either works or it doesn't, and it doesn't matter. But Kissinger just can't go through the details. Why not say that without the President's courage we couldn't have had this? We only have these opportunities at the time of a major event, and this is it. Kissinger doesn't realize the key point here. He wants to get everybody else mobilized and moving on it, but obviously Henry's the big gun. Maybe Haig can write out talking points for the others. Kissinger should see Bob Novak, because he's doing good stuff now. Also, Haig should see him on the personal side. The basic line here is the character: the lonely man in the White House, with little support from government, active opposition from the Senate and some House members, overwhelming opposition from media and opinion leaders, including religious, education and business, but strong support from labor. Recite all the arguments that were given to Kalb -- the President alone held on and pulled it out. Henry should realize the way to show that he and the President don't differ is for him to sell what the President did in his appearances, especially sell the hell out of the bombing. Right now he appears not to be keen for it. He told me to tell Henry that if the House and Senate -- our people -- were let down, they wished he would hit the President standing up to the critics on that point. He feels Ziegler misses the point, so does Kissinger in reacting to Kalb for instance, it does us no good to argue the details of the document.

He then put in a call to Timmons to get a reading on the Congressional appearance of Henry's, and confirmed from that that Henry didn't hit the critics at all, that there was no criticism of Congress for their resolutions, he didn't turn any of the questions around to get our points. He did cover the May 8 and change of attitude. When asked if the bombing did it, he said we don't know, but it could have been a change in North Vietnam's doves and hawks balance. He didn't



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say that what Congress has done has hurt, but he didn't have any questions on that, either. He had a lot on specifics and what we expect on foreign aid. There was a little on the buildup, but mostly on futures over there, how it works and all. Kissinger is very popular, got good applause, including from our opponents, and a standing and prolonged ovation at the House, but he didn't make our points.

So the President makes the point the missing link now is the "profile in courage". We've analyzed the editorials and it's not coming through. The briefing failed on this point. He only had the President in the last briefing three times, where when things were bad, he had him in 14 times. Henry kept saying we'd kill the critics, and we haven't done this at all. He's feeding the separation idea by his failure to build the President. Can you imagine Sorenson, Schlesinger, McNamara or Rusk handling this this way with Kennedy? We need to get some money in the bank for the future. This is our opportunity and we have to buy equity with it. The President obviously can't do this one himself. Others must carry the load this time. If we don't build this now, we won't be able to go back in, in terms of violations and so on. Henry keeps saying the President can just mobilize the country, but that won't work. The rift between Henry and the President is not created by leaks. It's fed by Henry's own nuances, because the press want to think there's a rift. We can't deny it, that just feeds it. We have to have Henry build the President. The other point to make is the difference between peace with honor and a bugout, what it would have meant to America, and in terms of our foreign policy. Kalb appearance and so on do us no good unless Kissinger builds the President's position for future equity. Ziegler should judge the Kissinger interviews on the basis of our interest, which is in building the President's equity.

He told me to get Kissinger before his meeting with Alsop and make the point that he's got to get across the lonely and heroic courage, that articles on process won't help us. He comments in the Fairley book that what the Kennedy people did with the failures for Kennedy, we've got to at least do as well with the successes. Also the point of getting the credit for doing the speech well. We then got to talking about doing a book by the guy Lott who has done the book on Presidential



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Inaugural addresses, building on the President's speeches on Vietnam, toward a generation of peace. He liked my idea of building up some of the story on the basis of that.

We also got into the problem of the Vice President. Apparently he's cabled in, or causing problems on his briefing with Henry in that he still wants to do some substantive negotiating. The President feels we do have to find some assignments for him, to head him off of the foreign trips where he wants to negotiate. He likes the idea of Ehrlichman's of having him handle the revenue sharing trips around the country. I had a long talk with Henry on the phone going into this whole problem further, trying to get him aimed right on building the line. He seems to understand the point, but I'm not sure he's capable of approaching it the way we want it done.

The President attended the peace service at 7:00 at the Key Biscayne church tonight, which went very well. Hoffmann did a superb job of picking up our line, which Ziegler worked on with him, and it was on national television, on CBS, so it should have done us a lot of good.

End of January 27.