



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

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Monday, March 19.

The President came back from Camp David this morning. Called me in as soon as he got back for a couple of hours. He had no schedule for today, so after our meeting he went over to the EOB and then called me over again for another three hours this afternoon on just general minor items. He got into trip and schedule plans. Was concerned about the plans for the Shah and the African, the Soviets, Braun, and Tanaka visits to us and wants to work in his African trip in mid-May, considering a stop in Paris for two days on the way back, so as to put some substance in an otherwise public relations type trip. Do this rather than having Pompidou here. Got into a long discussion on "Evenings at the White House" this morning. The plan for how often we ought to do them. How we ought to carry them out, the youth evening, youth church service, then had Rose in this afternoon going over the same thing again. Wants to get entertainment lined up for them, that sort of thing. Wants to get ahold of Flynn right away, the POW leader, and set the date for the POW dinner. Got into a lot of stuff about having dinners before State Dinners and for those who come to the after dinner entertainment. How the entertainment ought to be handled, how to bring the guests up, which groups of people to bring to which things, all that sort of stuff. A lot of PR, political weighing.

Got into the Ervin questions with Ziegler, because Ervin was on TV yesterday saying he would have White House staff people who refused to testify arrested, and try to force the issue that way. The President told Ron he thought it was too early to draw the sword on Ervin's political circus. Instead he should reiterate the President's position regarding the separation of powers. But emphasize that this is not a case of refusal to cooperate or to furnish information, as Presidents in the past have done. Ours is a policy of complete cooperation. Ron should go on the attack regarding our total cooperation. Hit the sensational statements regarding forcing White House aides have obscured the central fact that we have cooperated and will continue to. On IT&T, told Ron to say "no comment". He feels we need someone like Ron on top of the PR to really keep working full time in getting our digs in.



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Got into some of the arrangements on the POW briefing. Whether to have the wives or not, whether to do it in the Defense or State. Then got into the Thieu question. Wants to avoid his coming to DC if we can. Try to talk the Vice President out of that, but Haig and I agreed later that that can't be done. He also wanted Haig to get Sir Robert Thompson in to see the President. Then he changed his mind and said Haig should talk to him and say the President was so impressed with his book that he thinks he should write a sequel. He feels from his talk with Haig last week that the problem now is that Kissinger's trying to cover his left flank and is a little confused on all these things. Wants me to talk to Safire and get our story out on Vietnam. Point out the truth regarding Kissinger panicking on Cambodia, Laos, and Pakistan while the President always had to buck him up. Show him Kissinger's frenetic messages from Paris and tell him that side of the story. Also building Haig as the unsung hero, like a rock in all of this.

He obviously doesn't have any particular purpose driving him at the moment and he's sort of bouncing around covering all these loose ends. Partly trying to decide whether to do his State of the Union thing as an address to Congress and address to the nation on night time TV or just to go for the evening press conference. No decision made on that. He was going to work on it this afternoon, but called Rose and me over on the schedule stuff instead. Hopefully he will get to that decision in the next couple of days.

End of March 19.