



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

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

Monday, March 9.

No schedule today, and fortunately that's the way he wanted it. Plus, we got back into the Laos flap which, in Kissinger's absence, took an enormous amount of President's time.

Problem arose because of discrepancies in terms and in numbers of men killed over the years. Kissinger had given out more specific information than he should have in the briefing Friday - and then had guided the press group in giving out some more on Sunday. Turned out today, it was inaccurate. So poor Ziegler had to explain - in two long involved briefings. President spent a lot of time with him working it all out. Apparently came out reasonably well - but the whole episode shows more clearly than anything yet how the White House press is totally dedicated to screwing us, rather than getting the facts and reporting them. They bent every effort to tangle it up and prove a credibility gap instead of trying to get it straight. President called me at home tonight to have me call Kissinger to tell him not to nit-pick Ziegler and Haig's work while he was gone. They had done outstanding job.

I was in for three and a half hours this morning, alone, except for Ziegler in about a half hour. Went through my whole pile of schedule and information material - and got a lot decided. Nothing very important: worried about Mitchell's image and need to get crime action going; plan for GOP dinner and need to avoid President getting partisan; meeting on economy and need to get interest rates down; some long range trip plans; some press guidance for Connie Stuart; some songs he wants Johnny Cash to do at his "Evening at White House"; and the need to build up Herb Klein.

The other big deal today was a blast at Flanigan on some special waiver given to Union Oil for a slip Pete owns and leases to them. No wrongdoing in anyway, but a bad looking thing on the surface. Pete very disturbed that it will hurt Administration - long discussion in late afternoon about how to handle, with Harlow, Ehrlichman, Flanigan and the Treasury people. Tough because anything we do now looks bad - and there is really nothing wrong.



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President spent the afternoon at EOB. A lot of time with Ziegler regarding Laos, and quite a bit with Ehrlichman on the school problem. They now have a statement near the shape of being ready for release.