

Conversation No. 721-1

Date: May 8, 1972
Time: Unknown between 8:36 am and 8:38 am
Location: Oval Office

The President met with Alexander P. Butterfield.

Conv. No. 721-13 (cont.)

President's schedule

- Duke Law School reunion
- John W. Dean, III
- Egil ("Bud") Krogh, Jr.
- William H. Brown, III
- Equal Employment Opportunities Commission [EEOC]
- Charles W. Colson
- Number attending

Butterfield left at an unknown time before 8:38 am.

Conversation No. 721-2

Date: May 8, 1972
Time: 8:38 am - 8:43 am
Location: Oval Office

The President talked with John D. Ehrlichman.

[See Conversation No. 24-1]

Conversation No. 721-3

Date: May 8, 1972
Time: Unknown between 8:43 am and 8:54 am
Location: Oval Office

The President met with an unknown woman.

Henry A. Kissinger
-Meeting with President

The unknown woman left at an unknown time before 8:54 am.

Conversation No. 721-4

Date: May 8, 1972
Time: 8:54 am - 8:56 am
Location: Oval Office

The President met with Ronald L. Ziegler.

Conv. No. 721-13 (cont.)

Press briefings
-National Security Council [NSC] meeting
-Time
-Henry A. Kissinger
-Ziegler's presence
-Forthcoming speech
-Text
-Timing

Ziegler left at 8:56 am.

Conversation No. 721-5

Date: May 8, 1972
Time: Unknown between 8:56 am and 8:59 am
Location: Oval Office

The President met with an unknown woman.

Henry A. Kissinger
-Location
-Vice President Spiro T. Agnew
-Meeting with President
-National Security Council [NSC] meeting
-Time

The unknown woman left at an unknown time before 8:59 am.

Conversation No. 721-6

Date: May 8, 1972
Time: 8:59 am - 9:06 am
Location: Oval Office

The President met with Henry A. Kissinger.

Vietnam

- National Security Council [NSC] meeting
 - Richard M. Helms
 - Briefing
 - Previous Washington Special Actions Group [WSAG] meeting
 - Purpose
 - Impact of blockade
 - Adm. Thomas H. Moorer briefing Conv. No. 721-13 (cont.)
 - Duration
 - Helms
 - Previous meeting with Henry A. Kissinger
 - View of blockade
 - Central Intelligence Agency [CIA] view of shipments
 - Rail
- North Vietnam imports
 - Sea
 - Overland
 - Feasibility
 - Soviet Union and People's Republic of China [PRC] cooperation
 - Rerouting of supplies
 - Call from President
- Blockade
 - Resistance
 - Bureaucracy
 - Cambodia comparison
 - WSAG
 - U. Alexis Johnson
 - Health
 - Kissinger's view
 - [David] Kenneth Rush
 - Support
 - Consequences
 - Implementation
 - Intensity
 - Time
 - Vice President Spiro T. Agnew's view
 - Political consequences
 - Necessity
 - William P. Rogers
 - Johnson
 - Opposition
 - Opposition
 - Support
 - Moorer
 - Rush
 - John B. Connally
 - Opposition
 - Arguments
 - Effectiveness
 - Impact on South Vietnam

Alexander P. Butterfield entered at an unknown time after 8:59 am.

NSC meeting

Butterfield left at an unknown time before 9:06 am.

Vietnam

Conv. No. 721-13 (cont.)

- Blockade
 - Opposition
 - Reasoning
 - Melvin R. Laird
 - View of South Vietnam
- Rogers
 - Ambiguity
- South Vietnamese morale
- Kissinger's previous meeting
 - John Negroponte
 - George C. Carver
 - Support
- North Vietnam logistics
 - Impact
 - Manpower
 - Command and control
- South Vietnamese morale
- Bargaining chip
 - Prisoners of war [POWs]
- President's peace proposals in forthcoming speech
 - POWs
 - US forces
 - Wording
 - John K. Andrews, Jr.

Kissinger left at 9:06 am.

Conversation No. 721-7

Date: May 8, 1972

Time: 9:07 am - 9:08 am

Location: Oval Office

The President met with Henry A. Kissinger.

National Security Council [NSC] meeting

- Ronald L. Ziegler's presence
 - Leaks
- Decisions

Kissinger left at 9:08 am.

Conversation No. 721-8

Date: May 8, 1972
Time: Unknown between 12:07 pm and 12:13 pm
Location: Oval Office

Conv. No. 721-13 (cont.)

The President met with an unknown person.

Request for meeting with Henry A. Kissinger

The unknown person left at an unknown time before 12:13 pm.

Conversation No. 721-9

Date: May 8, 1972
Time: Unknown between 12:07 pm and 12:13 pm
Location: Oval Office

The President talked with H. R. ("Bob") Haldeman.

- John B. Connally
- Meeting with President
- Location
 - Meeting with Henry A. Kissinger
- Location of meeting with President
- Call

Conversation No. 721-10

Date: May 8, 1972
Time: Unknown between 12:07 and 12:13 pm
Location: Oval Office

The President met with an unknown man.

*[Previous PRMPA Personal Returnable (G) withdrawal reviewed under deed of gift 10/19/2022.
Segment cleared for release.]*

[Personal Returnable]

[721-010-w001]

[Duration: 6s]

Request

The unknown man left at an unknown time before 12:13 pm.

Conv. No. 721-13 (cont.)

Conversation No. 721-11

Date: May 8, 1972

Time: 12:13 pm - 1:15 pm

Location: Oval Office

The President met with Henry A. Kissinger.

Vietnam

- Previous National Security Council [NSC] meeting
 - Kissinger's evaluation
 - William P. Rogers
 - Position on blockade
 - Kissinger's evaluation
 - Blockade discussion
 - Melvin R. Laird's position
 - Rogers's position
 - Support compared with Laird
 - John B. Connally
 - Vice President Spiro T. Agnew
- United Nations [UN]
 - Kurt Waldheim
 - Security Council meeting
 - Significance
 - State Department
 - Soviet Union
 - Significance
 - People's Republic of China [PRC] and Soviet Union view of resolution
 - Delay
 - Waldheim
- Blockade
 - President's decision
 - Timing
 - President's schedule
 - Richard M. Helms's briefing
 - Content
 - President's decision
 - Possible delay
 - Problems
 - Leaks

- Duration
 - Advantages
- Public position
 - Timing of NSC meeting
 - 24-hour delay
 - Advantages
 - Duration
 - The President's schedule
- Soviet pressures
 - UN resolutions
 - Waldheim
- NSC meeting
 - Follow-up meeting with Connally
 - Location
 - H. R. ("Bob") Haldeman
 - Laird
- Laird's position

Conv. No. 721-13 (cont.)

Haldeman talked with the President between 12:21 and 12:22 pm.

[Conversation No. 721-11A]

[See Conversation No. 24-2]

[End of telephone conversation]

Vietnam

- Blockade
- Costs
 - Connally
- Delay
 - Soviet pressure
- President's decision
 - Discussion

Connally entered at an unknown time after 12:22 pm.

- Laird
- Connally

Connally's schedule

Vietnam

- NSC meeting
- UN
 - Waldheim
 - Security Council meeting
 - Initiative
 - State Department, Soviet Union
- Security Council resolution
 - Ceasefire

- Rogers's schedule
- Delays
- Blockade
 - President's decision
 - Possible delay
 - Kissinger's reasons
 - Advantages
 - Public perceptions
 - Disadvantages
 - Soviet awareness
 - UN meeting
 - Waldheim
 - Sources
 - State Department, Soviet Union
 - Reasons
 - President's decision
 - Delay
 - Advantages
 - Disadvantages
 - Opposition
 - Arguments
 - Advantages
 - Cabinet
 - Rogers's position
 - Laird's position
 - Helms's position
 - Briefing
 - Support
 - Connally
 - Vice President Spiro T. Agnew
 - Gen. George A. Lincoln
 - Connally
 - Lincoln
 - Agnew
 - Laird's position
 - Rogers's position
 - Timing
 - Rogers
 - Laird
 - Opposition
 - Connally's view
 - Timing
 - Connally's evaluation
 - Status quo*
 - Rogers
 - Laird
 - Rogers
 - Soviet Summit position
 - Laird's position
 - Disadvantages
 - Imports to North Vietnam

Conv. No. 721-13 (cont.)

- Percentage by sea
- Air strikes
 - Impact on supplies and rail lines
 - Rail lines
 - Problems with statistics
 - Gauges in North Vietnam and PRC
 - Impact on imports of Petroleum, oil and lubricants [POL]
 - Overland shipments
- Rogers and Laird
 - Conversation with Connally
 - Rogers
 - Soviet Summit concerns
 - Kissinger's trip results
 - Kissinger's view
 - Laird's concerns
 - Costs of blockade
 - Rogers's position
 - Bombing
 - Laird's opinion
 - Targets
 - Connally's position
 - Bombing of Haiphong and Hanoi
 - Support for President
 - US foreign policy
 - Effect of South Vietnam
 - Rogers and Laird
 - Support
- South Vietnamese collapse
 - US position
 - Advantages
 - Rogers's assessment
 - Connally's assessment
 - Message of retribution
 - Bombing of North Vietnam
 - Targets
 - Civilians
 - Fear of deaths
 - US message to aggressors
 - Kissinger's assessment
 - Consequences of failure
 - US troops in South Vietnam
 - Speed of possible South Vietnam collapse
 - Agnew's theory
 - Laird's theory
- North Vietnamese objectives
 - Kissinger's assessment
 - Kissinger's return from Soviet Union
 - Camp David
 - Provincial capitals
 - Army of Republic of Vietnam [ARVN] collapse
 - Dangers

- South Vietnam-US fighting
- Coalition government in Saigon
- Prisoners of war [POWs]
 - Bargaining chip
- Possible ARVN collapse
- Blockade advantages
 - Bargaining chip
 - POWs
 - Nguyen Van Thieu
 - South Vietnamese morale
- Impact
 - Laird's assessment
 - Kissinger's view
 - Moorer's assessment
 - POL supplies
 - Overland shipments
 - PRC and Soviet Union coordination
 - Air strikes
 - North Vietnamese reaction
 - Kissinger's view
- North Vietnamese leadership considerations
 - Division supplies
- Impact
 - North Vietnam logistical system
 - Difficulty in changing
- North Vietnamese campaign
 - Hue
 - South Vietnam response
 - North Vietnam method of operation
 - Inflexibility
- Reaction of Soviet Union and PRC
- US domestic support
- Soviet reaction
 - Pressure on North Vietnam
 - Summit
 - Cancellation
 - US statement
 - Ronald L. Ziegler's release
 - Kissinger's possible briefing
 - Rogers's position
 - Connally's view
 - Announcement of agreements
 - North Vietnam offensive
 - South Vietnam military situation
 - Laird's assessments
 - Cambodia, Laos comparisons

Conv. No. 721-13 (cont.)

[Previous National Security (B) withdrawal reviewed under MDR guidelines case number

[National Security]

[721-011-w003]

[Duration: 18s]

Vietnam

Conv. No. 721-13 (cont.)

- Blockade
 - South Vietnam military situation
 - Melvin R. Laird's assessments
 - Cambodia, Laos comparisons
 - Central Intelligence Agency [CIA] reports
 - Analysis of Cambodian reserves
 - Norodom Sihanouk

Vietnam

- Blockade
 - South Vietnam military situation
 - Effect of blockade
 - Diplomatic
 - On South Vietnam collapse
 - On bargaining for POWs
 - Military operations
 - North Vietnam
 - South Vietnam morale
 - North Vietnam
 - POL supplies
 - Air strikes
 - Impact
 - Utilities
 - Communications
 - Latest strikes
 - Damage reports
 - President's options
 - South Vietnam collapse
 - US efforts to prevent
 - Rogers
 - Protests
 - Domestic
 - Senate
 - UN
 - PRC and Soviet Union
 - President's East-West policies
 - Impact
 - Press
 - American people
 - Support for President
 - Opposition to war
 - American spirit

- Connally's view
- Possible US withdrawal
 - Timing
 - Forthcoming election
 - Means
 - Diplomatic efforts
 - North Vietnamese response
 - Military efforts
 - POWs, troop withdrawal
 - Intensity
 - Laos, Cambodia
 - Necessity
 - Support
 - Duration
 - Time
 - Possible US withdrawal
- North Vietnamese offensive
 - Duration
 - Impact of blockade
 - Weather
 - Hue
 - Future strategy
 - Time
 - Democratic National Convention
 - Movement of troops
 - B-3 front
 - Cambodia
 - October offensive
 - Effect of blockade
- Blockade
 - Necessity
 - President's speech
 - Haldeman
 - Time
 - Forthcoming briefing for Congressional leaders
 - Content
 - Notification of Rogers and Laird
 - Peace offer
 - POW exchange
 - Ceasefire
 - US withdrawal
 - Time
 - Hugh Scott
 - POWs
 - Ceasefire
 - US withdrawal
 - Trade
 - Advantages for North Vietnam
 - Rogers's and Laird's notification
 - Use of term blockade
 - Domestic response

Conv. No. 721-13 (cont.)

- Soviet response
- Press use
- Mining
- Interception of ships
- Contents
 - Mining
 - Instructions for US forces
 - Interdiction

Conv. No. 721-13 (cont.)

Connally left at 12:59 pm.

- Drafting
 - Kissinger's schedule
 - Haldeman
- Notification of Rogers and Laird
 - Kissinger
 - Alexander M. Haig, Jr.
 - Time
- Rogers
 - Soviet Summit
 - The President's view

Haldeman and Manolo Sanchez entered at 1:00 pm.

- President's schedule
 - Executive Office Building [EOB]

- Kissinger's schedule
 - Soviet embassy

Sanchez left at an unknown time before 1:02 pm.

Vietnam

- Democrats
 - Senate caucus
 - Possible meeting with President
 - Arrangements
 - Clifford P. Case-Frank F. Church amendment
 - Michael J. Mansfield's role
- Blockade
 - President's speech
 - Television time
 - Notification
 - Cabinet
 - NSC
 - Andrews
 - Time
 - Rogers and Laird

Kissinger left at 1:02 pm.

- President's possible meeting with Democratic leaders
 - Mansfield
 - Time
 - Press reports
 - NSC meeting
 - Democratic leaders
 - J. William Fulbright, John C. Stennis
 - Delay in antiwar amendment vote
 - Soviet summit
 - Hawks' position
 - Stennis
 - Henry M. ("Scoop") Jackson's statement
 - Ground troops
 - Bombing
 - Hanoi, Haiphong
 - Time
 - Need
- President's speech
 - Briefing of Senate Democratic leaders
 - Time
 - Mansfield's call
 - Delay in response
 - Notification
 - Announcement of television time
 - Time to release
 - Ziegler
 - Briefing for Congressional leaders
 - Attendees
 - Kissinger's opinion
 - Allen J. Ellender
 - Fulbright
 - Mansfield
 - The President's view
 - Briefing for committee chairmen
 - Rogers
- Blockade
 - Chances of success
 - Rogers's assessment
 - Support for the President
 - US military strength
 - Options
 - Laird's view
 - South Vietnam's strengths
 - Deterioration
 - Rogers's argument compared with Laird's argument
 - Alternatives
 - Connally's view
 - Need to try
 - US credibility
 - POWs
 - US credibility

Conv. No. 721-13 (cont.)

- Rogers's view
 - Compared with Connally's view
 - PRC
 - Soviet Union
- Soviet Summit
- President's strengths
- Chance of success
- Outcry
- Rogers's view
 - Connally's view
 - Soviet Summit
 - Kissinger's role
 - The President's view
- Laird
 - The President's view
 - Opposition to blockade
- President's decision
 - Chances of success in Vietnam
 - Effect on Summit
 - Cancellation
 - Probability
 - Timing
 - Public opinion
 - Expectations
 - Separability
 - Effect of military situation
 - Time
 - North Vietnam offensive
- President's forthcoming speech
 - Arrangements
 - Cabinet meeting

Conv. No. 721-13 (cont.)

The President and Haldeman left at 1:15 pm.

Conversation No. 721-12

Date: May 8, 1972

Time: Unknown between 1:15 pm and 8:40 pm

Location: Oval Office

Unknown persons met.

Oval Office tour

- The President's location
 - Executive Office Building [EOB]
- The President's Senate campaign
- President's office in the EOB
- Roosevelt Room

Unknown persons left at an unknown time before 8:40 pm.

Conv. No. 721-13 (cont.)
Conversation No. 721-13

Date: May 8, 1972
Time: Unknown between 1:15 pm and 8:40 pm
Location: Oval Office

Stephen B. Bull met with unknown persons [Secret Service agents].

[Previous archivists categorized this section as unintelligible. It has been rereviewed and released 10/19/2022.]

[Unintelligible]
[721-013-w001]
[Duration: 33s]

Schedule
-Departure

Bull and the unknown agents left at an unknown time before 8:40 pm.