



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

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Monday, February 14th. The Attorney General stopped by this morning to give me his letter of resignation and talk a little about the procedure for handling it. We'll announce it tomorrow, effective March 1st.

The President dictated to me a little later some thoughts on what to put in the official letter of acceptance. Then he's going to write a handwritten personal letter to him, not for release.

Kissinger was in at midday, to report on some various odds and ends. We discussed the question of Peterson and Butz going on a trade mission to Moscow in March. Henry was just going to have Peterson go, and I suggested adding Butz to dilute him. We also talked about Hillenbrand and Farlan on Ambassadorial assignments. Kissinger was backing off a little and agreeing that Hillenbrand can go to Germany...

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Audio Cassette 19, Side A, Withdrawn Item Number 13 [AC-19(A) Sel 10]  
Duration: 11 seconds

...and he says Farland has to be gotten out of Pakistan, because he won't stay there any longer.

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Then Henry got into a discussion with the President on his latest report from Paris. He's ecstatic, because Walters called to say that the North Vietnamese had called him in and had been the most pleasant they've ever been. Said they wanted to invite Henry for a luncheon meeting on March 17, exactly thirty days after the day we leave for China. Henry was particularly ecstatic, because



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they said it would be for lunch, whereas they have never had any American official for any meal before in all of Henry's meetings with them. Although, they ran from 10:00 in the morning to 4:00 in the afternoon, they were without any meals. He thinks this is a significant sign.

Xuan Thuy and Le Duc Tho will both be there, and so he thinks at the very least this will insure no major offensive, as we've been fearing. And that quite possibly it may even lead to a breakthrough in opening the peace talks on a serious basis, which would be a spectacular break: actually, the fact of not having an offensive is spectacular in itself.

He and the President then got into quite a discussion on the whole question of these dealings, plus dealing with the Chinese, and the President questioned Henry pretty strongly on the whole point of why he thought there was any real significance to this, that it wasn't just a North Vietnamese ploy. But Henry feels there has to be some element of seriousness in it this time.

They then had some discussion also about their technique in dealing with the Chinese, and how they're going to go about that, and the President emphasized that he's going to take a very strong position all the way through on that. Henry's afraid, I think, that the President's going to take too strong a position, and that it wants to be sure that he does all the necessary philosophizing and everything with the Chinese, and doesn't just charge in on a hard line, fixed position. The President feels that the progress that we've made with the North Vietnamese can be attributed in no small degree to the heavy attack we've laid on the peace critics here at home, and that would include my attack last week as well as the others. He felt that had we not done that, they would have figured we were back in a weak position, whereas by fighting back hard, instead of just being kicked around by our critics, it was clear that we meant business on the peace proposal. And so there's a real chance that will buy us the relief from the offensive. Also, he thinks our



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current heavy bombing of South Vietnam must have had an effect, as well as moving the three carriers into position and that sort of thing. Henry feels the same way, and thinks that it all adds up to very positive situation for us at this point.

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As does the Russian picture as Henry works out the details with Dobrynin for that summit. Because, it looks as if they're going to settle quite a few basic substantive items.

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The President had a long meeting with Malraux this afternoon and then the dinner for Malraux this evening.

End of February 14th.