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Haldeman Was Just Kidding

Washington

The White House dismissed as jesting yesterday presidential assistant H. R. Haldeman's remark that a group of men gather secretly in New York every Sunday "to decide what the Eastern Establishment media line" will be for the week ahead.

Haldeman worked this into a speech in Los Angeles Saturday in which he decried what he called an "orgy of doom crying" by news commentators who say President Nixon has been isolated by his staff. Haldeman is the President's aide who screens presidential appointments and the flow of reports to Mr. Nixon's desk.

Asked about Haldeman's remarks, White House press secretary Ronald L. Ziegler told reporters that he had checked with Haldeman.

Haldeman, he said, was speaking strictly in jest.

Associated Press