



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

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Sunday, May 18.

At Camp David. Slept late. Worked for a while after breakfast - then to pool for sun, swim, lunch, TV of Apollo 10 launch. Interrupted by word President was ready to leave. Chopper back to White House. President into office and buzzed me in for 2 hours.

First concern was White House staff. He'd been doing a lot of thinking about feeling that we don't do an adequate job of selling our story. Feels Ziegler is a superb mechanic but not a designer. He had read all the Sunday papers pretty thoroughly and found just what he had expected and had predicted to Kissinger - all comments regarding his speech were either neutral or negative. Not one line regarding the fact that 98 percent of the foreign press had acclaimed the speech, or the strong positive reaction in Congress. Makes point that if JFK had made the speech they would have all been ecstatic. (Afraid a good part of this is a fact of life, but I'm sure we could do a lot better.)

Real problem, as he says, is that we don't have a real PR operator, at a very high level, who really works at this all day, every day. Klein and Wilkinson are both very inadequate, and not in enough.

President is reading Patton's book - and quoted point that a successful commander has to have leadership and be a superb mechanic but most important be ruthless in analyzing his staff and throwing out the people that are not up to it. Another quote - there are more tired division commanders than there are tired divisions, and all tired men are pessimists.

Overall, we just haven't done an adequate job of building up the President, even though the press has been generally good. The accurate story of how hard he works, etc., is not getting out - i.e., about how he wrote his speech. He says the staff are all doing as well as they can, considering their limitations.



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He wants Ehrlichman, Kissinger and me to try to figure this all out. Says we are the only people on the staff smart and strong enough to do it. Would like to have Mitchell involved also, but feels he's too involved. Hope we can do something.

Thinking about schedule, he feels he should be more aloof, inaccessible, mysterious, i.e., de Gaulle feels over-exposure detracts from impact. Shouldn't be too chummy. etc.