



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

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Wednesday, August 27.

LBJ's birthday. President had personally planned the whole production for today - from the original idea down to the details of a mariachi band at the helipad. We had some time in the morning, general discussion with President and Ehrlichman and Kissinger regarding odds and ends.

The Johnsons arrived on time. President and Pat Nixon went out to pad in golf cart to greet them. Mariachis played "Happy Birthday", and all the staff and press were ordered out to sing. Pat Nixon took the family to the house. President took LBJ to the office for briefing. Called me in as soon as they got there - LBJ had launched immediately into a discussion of his problems with adequate staff, funds, GSA snooping and press leaks, etc. He's really psychopathic. Raved on and on, about how humiliating it all was. Had Tom Johnson bring all the press clips, official records, etc., and went on for forty-five minutes. Kissinger and Ehrlichman were called in in the meantime. Fortunately LBJ knew and approved of my memo ordering support for him - main complaint was that it isn't being implemented.

He also wove in, several times, references to his decision not to run, which he implies was firmly made long before he announced it. This was known to Rusk, but few others. Cited examples of papers he's working on, i.e., his Vietnam troop decisions (says Westmoreland now wants copies of all those); his memo to JFK regarding moon program feasibility that led to the decision, etc. Is obviously completely absorbed in writing history the way he wants it to be. Especially regarding the war, the bombing pause, etc.

On plane to Redwoods he urged President not to listen to the critics - cited mistakes he had made in this regard. Gave excellent extemporaneous remarks at dedication ceremony - think he was genuinely and deeply pleased. Setting and ceremony were great - whole idea of President's was well worthwhile.



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President had me meet with Tom Johnson to work out all the problems, and I think we can settle it all satisfactorily. They really do have a problem regarding mail and de-classifying the 32 million pieces of paper. We will provide manpower through Kissinger operation. LBJ makes valid point that our interests are very much involved - in that there will be many of his papers we will not want made public - but general interest is, of course, to release as much as possible.

President in usual stage-managing fashion, completely screwed up the plane seating arrangements as soon as we were aboard Air Force One. Decided to reverse family, staff and VIP locations, and had everything in a complete turmoil. He was cranked up with the whole deal, and I think really enjoyed having LBJ on his new plane.