



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

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Tuesday, April 14.

Apollo 13 day. And the Danish Prime Minister. President had to spend two hours on arrival and meeting, and was furious that visit had even been scheduled. After that, the rest of the day was spent on Apollo 13 - starting with Ehrlichman urging an instant trip to Houston - which we managed to avoid, after getting Borman to recommend against it. Then a whole review of other alternatives to show President's concern and interest. Finally ended up going out to Goddard Space Center for a briefing - good move and it worked out fine. President had Mike Collins assigned as his briefer because Borman was needed in Houston. Whole deal still pretty shaky, but there's apparently an even chance that they'll get back. President resisted all grandstanding ideas. Did cancel entertainment at dinner tonight and will go back to office instead for a briefing from Collins.

President raised Kissinger issue again today, this time regarding his briefings. Afraid they may be as bad as his speech writing. Thinks they may have no sell and be too long. Ziegler says no, they're very good.

Moved on new Justice - President had to force it through - as everyone wanted to delay, but he was bound and determined to move fast.

Decided to postpone Vietnam speech because of Apollo abort. Will wait until Monday. President called Laird and Rogers to tell them, and order no discussion. Problem of holding it that long, but has them thinking it's 40,000-50,000 instead of 150,000.

I got into a bind with VP by ordering him to halt on runway at Des Moines as he was leaving for Houston. Made him sit and wait for over an hour while President was with Prime Minister, then raised question with President and he fully agreed VP should not go to Houston for same reasons President shouldn't - plus upstaging President. VP mad as hell, but agreed to follow orders and go to Florida and wait.



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Overall a crisis day that came out OK - but showed we aren't really geared for it. Too much confusion and duplication as everyone gets into the act. Need more discipline and routine. Not too bad.