



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

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Friday, April 17.

Apollo 13 day. They made it back and President was really elated! Started out in the morning with some general details, then into a lot of the planning, etc., for his participation in Apollo return. Had TV, squawk box and Collins and Anders set up in Alex's office to keep him posted. Kind of anxious regarding results but basically totally confident they'd make it - and all wrapped up on little specifics regarding the trip, which we have very well set up on contingency basis.

Then back to the continual concern regarding how we're getting the line out - or not getting it out. Still on a strong anti-Klein and Ziegler kick on basis that Ziegler is too young and Klein is too dull to sell enthusiastically. Fears we are losing the potential momentum and value regarding SALT, postal settlement and Family Assistance. Most concerned still with feeling we are not getting over the mystique of Presidential leadership and he's basically right - although we're sure trying. Makes point that Ziegler is superb at handling hard news and basic press needs - but just doesn't comprehend the importance of the background and mystique.

For splashdown, President watched in Alex Butterfield's office with Alex, me, Anders, Collins and Kissinger. Was very cranked up. Ordered cigars for all on success when learned that was Chris Kraft tradition at NASA. Put through calls to wives immediately, then waited to call astronauts till they were aboard Iwo Jima and had called wives. Meanwhile President called all the Congressional leaders and George Meany, saying to all, "Isn't this a great day." He was really excited. Even told Ford to give his best to Justice Douglas (whom Ford is trying to impeach). Then talked to astronauts and told them of trip plans - then out to press to do likewise, then over to EOB at about 3:30, with no lunch - where Ehrlichman says by 4:15 he was loaded. Took a nap and was ready for GOP drop by, then "Evening at White House" with Johnny Cash. Lots of people, enthusiasm! It was a great day.