



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

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Wednesday, April 15.

Long morning session on schedule - as we re-juggle the next couple of weeks and set up for various contingencies regarding Apollo. Lot of discussion regarding various options for President about Apollo return - go to Houston, go to splashdown, etc. President determined to find exactly right way for his getting into it. Wanted to be first one on the air to announce safe landing. I reviewed a whole range of these with Borman - then back to discussion with President. Out of that developed my plan for President going to Houston to greet ground crew and take wives to Hawaii to meet astronauts. Give them Medal of Freedom. President wanted to then return Saturday overnight, and have White House Church. Later ended up with plan to stay in Hawaii and have meeting with Bunker and Abrams - then back Sunday night for speech Monday night.

Another blast regarding our PR offensive, lack of sell and enthusiasm, lack of adequate use of Cabinet officers; we let them get away with passive Presidency line, Ziegler not able to see subtleties. Also into John and Martha Mitchell problem. And again wants Ziegler to analyze Kissinger briefings on whether he sells our line, not just analyzes.

President spent afternoon at EOB working on Vietnam speech, so I had chance to get trip operation going. Called me over at end to review status. Decided to go ahead.

He spends as much time discussing the problem he has of shortage of time, as he does doing the things he says he doesn't have time to do. Seems to have lost a lot of the basic "feel" of the job that he had. Partly a result of multiple unsolvable problems bearing in, and partly a function of less newness in the job. He really needs crises to deal with, and is not at his best with a period of general erosion such as this. Moved well on postal strike, Pompidou, etc. - but not good on self-initiated momentum. This is undoubtedly perfectly natural and, I suspect, represents a normal doldrum period through which we'll pass.