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11 February 1971

Dear Mrs. Meagher, I have nothing interesting to report, but I do want to thank you for your prompt response to my letter, and especially for telling it "like it is" and not giving me the usual words of encouragement that one is apt to hear in such a situation (e.g., comments such as, "anyone with your talents is bound to find a good job," etc.). I'm certain that the "outside world" is, as you said, full of frustrations and uncertainties, and I am not so naive to expect that I shall find work that I shall really love; I never expect to wake up in a cheerful mood on a Monday morning and rush down to some office to get started an hour early. But graduate school, I have found, is more than simply a badly frustrating experience; it seems, as Robert G. Ingersoll said over 80 years ago, that "much that is called education simply unfits men successfully to fight the battle of life. Thousands are today studying things that will be of exceedingly little importance to them or to others." Indeed, I find that grad school prepares one for all that which life is NOT. It teaches one to keep disordered hours, to work in spurts, and--worst of all--it gives one a false sense of security well into his mid-twenties. The reality of the present recession (or should I say depression?!) has only hit me in the last ten days; I always knew it was there, but so long as I was planning to continue in school, with a guaranteed Ford Foundation fellowship, it was about as real to me as the problems of peasants in Paraguay. Since I last wrote you, I have decided to leave school as soon as any job becomes available; sticking on until September to (possibly) get a master's degree would require me to read about five dull and uninteresting books a week for about six months, and I haven't the motivation to read the first one. I've applied for various positions in the university (non-academic jobs), and have written to various places. As for the field of journalism, I'm going to try several newspapers and magazines, but, given the state of the economy and my lack of formal training, I'm not very optimistic.

I know exactly what you mean about being "ideologically homeless!" Certainly, Nixon is the worst thing that has happened to America since the Depression, if not since the Civil War--but what are the alternatives? Would Muskie or Teddy Kennedy really be much better? I'd vote for any Democrat against Nixon, but I doubt that much would be accomplished. And, then, I am completely fed up with the lunatic left--not only the more extreme WR critics, but the whole crowd who think that Jerry Rubin, Abby Hoffman, et. al. are really any better than Ronald Reagan, Spiro Agnew, and Co. And, furthermore, as I may have pointed out last time, I'm fed up with ivory tower "scholars" who write obscure books because of the demands of "publish or perish" and then, in an incredible display of arrogance, take the attitude that they are somehow "better" than most other people. At this point, I must sheepishly borrow an epithet from Spiro's speechwriters, and agree that such people really are "effete snobs." These same people--who told me that the JFK investigation was a "who-done-it" of no historical importance--get together in their little cliques, angrily discuss the socio-economic causes that led to the fragmentation of the New England merchant community in the late 1600's, and actually take themselves seriously, as though they were doctors arguing over the efficacy of a possible cure for cancer! All these "scholars" could disappear tomorrow, and no one would miss them except their families (and sometimes I even wonder about that).

I suppose a lot of this is "sour grapes" about the year and a half

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February 1971

that I've thrown away in graduate school; perhaps an analyst would say that it's a clever way of striking out at my ex-girlfriend, who is a true scholar and "intellectual." Well, maybe so, but if this is the case, then it's all the more reason why I shouldn't be in graduate school; I am guilty of "attitudes unbecoming a professional historian."

Well, enough on that topic. As might be expected, there's still no word from Gary Schoener. If I were a little more brash, I'd send him a bill for ten dollars to pay for that useless Thornley transcript. But, then, I have better things to do with my time. You may be right that we have entered a new "Dark Age," and that there are no easy answers and no happy endings, but I'm not giving up yet. For perhaps there may be no easy answers, but there may be answers, none the less; there may be no happy endings, but perhaps there are some tolerable ones. Well, it's only a maybe, but it's all I have to go on right now.

I'll write again when things become clearer.

Sincerely,  
*Richard P. Eddleman*  
Richard P. Eddleman

P.S. #1 - If you're at all interested in that Thornley transcript, I'll be glad to bring it to you when I'm in New York for job interviews (probably before mid-April), but I must admit that it's really just 103 pages of testimony which (so far as I can see) doesn't differ much, in any significant way, from that which is printed in the official records.

P.S. #2 - IF ANY RESPONSIBLE CRITIC IS WILLING TO PAY A RESEARCHER TO LOOK FOR CERTAIN ITEMS IN ANY OF THE AVAILABLE PIECES OF EVIDENCE, I WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR INFORMING ME - ALTHOUGH I'M QUITE RESIGNED TO THE FACT THAT NO SUCH JOB EXISTS.