

5/24/73

Dear Dick,

A hasty note before having to leave for a day in Washington to let you know that I am nibbling away at a Watergate book. I hope that by now it is as clear to you as it is to me that, except in generalities, it is not possible to outline a book that can't be completely written for a short period. Instead, I have been writing pieces of what I believe should be the content, regardless of what eventuates. In some cases it has been the beginnings of chapters, in some cases just a few pages of what should appear in some chapter.

If you have been able to follow developments with all the things you must do, then I think you realize some of my forecasts are accurate and that the book rushed too much will be dated and dead before it appears. In what thinking about formulation I've been able to do I have become convinced that the basic doctrine of what I have in mind is not only the only safe formulation but it is the only correct one, historically, politically, however considered.

You will recall that I said the Senate committee would not keep, would not be able to keep, the schedule it set for itself. By tonight, as I recall, it was to have heard all but a couple of the 20 witnesses it had scheduled. It has heard about 5. And it recesses tonight.

The President's "unexpected" admissions are not unexpected to me and to date he has done exactly as my analyses predicted he would. He has given a few details I did not anticipate, but that is the only departure. So, I feel confident about my understanding.

One of the things that changes this, one I did not anticipate, one I am not certain I understand except in its intent, is the unexpressed thing Alch did yesterday. From the immediate coverage, he is getting away with it. If he does not, it can backfire. If you paid close attention to it, you are sharp enough to know that he was not out to exculpate himself and that his intent was to give Nixon a base for counterattack that would be seized for him by the media. I am not confident that Ansterwald has the wit, on his own, to do with this what can be done. I am confident that it can be done. Alch went too far, which tells me that he is uptight but is not conclusive on why.

If you have followed the story, you know the validation of what I was driving at in my Dean correspondence that is supposed to be disclosed in a statement promised for tomorrow.

So, there is no need for you to write. My purpose is merely to keep you up to date on what I am attempting. Even the domestic-intelligence part of what I told you is now a matter of admission by the chief paranoid, Herr Nixon. (I would hope this admission would encourage the ACLU to take a case for me. If they do I'd be more inclined to make this a more personal writing, to be tempted to include the analyses I made as the story developed, going back to and quoting from the 1968 writing, for part of the story is the failure of the media to understand and report what was happening in the country.) I have some tentative chapter titles and I have seen what is unreported in the stories that have appeared. For example, in his yesterday's testimony what Ulasevics really said is that for three years he had been egging for Nixon on all other politicians. He gave the lie to the obviously fraudulent "national security" justification, to the President himself all over again, and gave all the pain something to worry about.

At the moment my major problem is mechanical, keeping up and writing simultaneously. It would take much less time later, when transcripts will be available. Now I must be glued to the tube. In fact, I'm taking a radio to Washington with me today so that, when I am out of the car and not otherwise occupied, I can listen.

Best