

This appears to be part of the
"Let's Get On With the Business
of America and Leave Watergate
to the Courts" Chorus. Never
heard of Robert Robert L. King.
This could have been written in
the WH, of course.

*Type of campaign communication,
Spokesman, Whitehouse, politics*

A Former Aide Talks About the President

It is now clear that the American-American story must be a concern. And although it may not offer some answers, it may be helpful in this case. Let me add:

President Nixon has a personal friendship with Mr. Nixon, dating back to the Post-Particular laws of 1948, during my stay at the Entertainment. Also, I have had discussions with him since 1953, 1956 and 1957, as far as his political philosophy and his views on the Vice President. He is a man who is really based on the individual, plus experience. He could know his beliefs in the law's integrity and ultimate validity. While some detractors might argue a lack of objectivity because of these facts, I think it likely represents a more valid basis for judgment than many of the present judges. My own personal basis of reference, built on long friendship and what I feel my association has given me in the way of insight into, and understanding, of Mr. Nixon's basic character and motivations are therefore, the platform from which I speak.

Perhaps there is at least a partial key to an understanding of the current drama and to the question, "How could Mr. Nixon not have known?" in his instructions to me when I first entered into an employer-employee relationship in January, 1953. Mr. Nixon told me that one of my prime duties would be to "protect" him so that he would have sufficient time to study, read, think and otherwise concentrate on the problems with which he was dealing. You will recall that President Eisenhower, even then, robust him into the center of the turbulent abiding interest of foreign policy and world politics. Again, time was taken up in preparation for these trips and, in Johnson's time, was absorbed in meetings of the Cabinet, National Security Council, Government Contracts Committee, and other offices under the members' protection. This is nothing like the members whom I have known with whom they were off duty. Rather, for Mr. Nixon, it was a constant burden to be in his office. He did this because he wanted to have his legal department available to him. I had to do all that I could to keep him from doing this, and I did my best to do so. I am sure that he did not know that he was being asked to do this, but it is an important consideration in this case.

I believe that perhaps in their too-hasty to have my take account it too

him to present a false front. The complementary character of Mrs. Nixon herself would, I think, be a deterrent if he were even tempted.

However, too literal an interpretation on the part of top staff people in a high political situation (and politics is really politics) can lead to a type of blindness and insensitivity on the part of both master and servant which can, in turn, lead to real problems. Such phrases as "the Berlin Wall," and rumors that the top staff were harder to see than the President himself, could have arisen, or because of too strict a self-defense with the admonition of "protect yourself," and with the subsequent result of almost building a double moat around the president.

Such a system breeds an inadequate delegation of power. This, in turn, carries with it the seeds of its own destruction when it reposes in individuals whose experience, capacity (which is built on experience) and political instincts are limited. Other times, other places and other people, such a modus operandi might well have worked. The tragedy is that in this instance, sincere, hardworking, intelligent, dedicated, and patriotic young men were victims of a power-bred myopia which made them vulnerable to their own experience, particularly political inexperience.

These thoughts are offered by way of explanation, not absolution, as both the initiator and receiver of presidential power share in the responsibility for what happened. But the daily inference and outright charges that Richard Nixon has lied to the American people is a cruel lie itself. In one's own 30 years of friendship and intermittent association I have known a man who I think is constitutionally unable to lie, particularly about such an overriding question of morality and integrity. Frankly, this characteristic is an indicator of that which has so frustrated and antagonized that part of the media which has been so long critical. Mr. Nixon gives the impression of a straight, Fourth of July, God-fearing,apple pie patriot. Some areas of the press-TV simply don't believe he is for real. His scruples and their frustration lie in the fact that his character is indeed founded on these "square" principles. His concept of his own moral life, and of the President's, is a solid and unassailable one.

In addition, the man is simply too intelligent to even consider the risk of a "second-story job" on Democratic headquarters to obtain the knowledge of what went on in George O'Brien's office. It is completely out of character for a man who would voluntarily deny himself the Presidency when it was probably within his grasp. Here, of course, I refer to 1960 when it is reported that J. Edgar Hoover and many friends urged him to postpone the election because of known and notorious voter frauds in Illinois, Michigan and Texas. Incidentally, I can imagine no more brutal assault on the American system than that of the actual theft of ballots and diversion of the citizens' basic voting right at the ballot box itself.

Yes, I think I know "how" Watergate happened. Mr. Nixon's remoteness and that of his top staff people made the latter vulnerable to an excess of power. The tragic irony is that equal excesses of zeal and dedication to a great President (which normally are admirable qualities) were short-circuited by this fatal juxtaposition which gradually eroded the judgement of otherwise good men.

I think most Americans will applaud President Nixon for the action he did take in initiating efforts to discover the source of leaks from the innermost proceedings of

the National Security Council and other high policy bodies. The nation's security demanded such action. At what point would continuing leaks undermine the delicate balances even then being achieved between Russia and China by the Nixon-Kissinger plans? Any way you cut the Ellsberg cake, this man violated the law too, and the usual double standard under which the far-left operates is painfully evident. Ellsberg is a hero — but the Nixon staff men are characterized as lawbreakers. However, this final element of a properly motivated inquiry which of necessity employed justifiable and available investigative techniques of microphones and/or telephone taps, even surreptitious entry, made easy the transition to their improper use and the excesses of Watergate and the so-called "plumbers unit."

John Mitchell's testimony

(Whatever you do, don't tell me the "constitutional power" which Nixon has. Gruber and Co. say it's illegal, we have no constitutional authority to do anything. I think that's right. He brought it up, and I think it's been raised again. I think it's a silly argument to have. I think it's a silly argument to say that the Constitution says we must do this or that. I think that's an old fashioned way of looking at it. I think it's a very pernicious way of looking at it. I think it's important, I think it's a very important part of our political system that we do things like that. We do things like that, and nothing in this way is as considerable as it is going to be in the next few years. I think it's a good policy, but it's incomprehensible in this bad scenario to want to tell the actors and everything "you've got to keep the facts from the President while they indulge themselves in the vain hope that it would all eventually just go away." It's just as comprehensible that the system of protectionism protects yourself if you're a terrible breeding ground for excessive delegated authority. Overextension of an idealistic nature, the kind of need and holistic, all-encompassing, all-inclusive and all-over control by characterized Watergate.

The final point is to the ultimate question of will he be forced to fire his lawyer or the American people. And President Nixon did not participate in either the planning or execution of Watergate. This was the most irresponsible book for a staff, Clinton and personal secretary. But made such a thing possible by allowing a part of the community to bury him. I'm sure he can't help this man's much more difficult than the knowledge of what the former to close personal friends of his authorities. Mr. Nixon's "passiveness" is well known. Although in this photo must have the time it has given him to know this plan the grand strategy of international chess game. America, S. Korea and China have been in the last ten in the first place, and the type of the future. In other words, I think it's a good idea to keep the people in the loop, and don't want to be

Defending Nixon

Editor—God bless Robert L. King for his most welcome letter August 25 in defense of President Nixon.

I find it horrifying that people can be so vicious and malicious toward this great man they've elected as President of the United States. What is the matter with good old fashioned loyalty? . . .

CAROLE PLESSAS.

Piedmont.

Editor—. . . The platform from which King speaks, as a former Presidential aide, may qualify him to speak about Mr. Nixon, but I don't think it necessarily represents a more valid basis for judgment of Mr. Nixon's character and motivations. My opinion is simply that Mr. Nixon is tarred with the same brush as the other bad actors, and I agree that they are indeed "victims of an over-zealous power-bred myopia." In fact, some of the lesser characters are now in jail.

I consider some of King's statements and conclusions incongruous and downright frightening, such as the one about the President being "constitutionally unable to lie." It is obvious to me, as it is to everyone, that he has deceived and lied to the people many times, constitutionally or not. As for his assessment of Mitchell's testimony, following above, that of the others, I say it was just plain garbage, along with the rest of it.

WILLIAM J. ROMAINE.

El Cerrito.

Editor—I have one question for Robert L. King. . . . He states that Nixon is constitutionally unable to lie. He continues, later, "His concept of his own mission in life" of the Presidency itself, would make it impossible for him to present a false front."

How does King square these comments with the known fact that Mr. Nixon knew of, if indeed he did not personally order, 3630 incinerations of B-52's which dropped

100,000 tons of bombs on Cambodian villages? Mr. Nixon was publicly boasting that United States citizens that he were maintaining the neutrality of Cambodia.

Neither Congress nor the administration had any knowledge for operations, nor any member of the public was informed of these deadly carpet raids. The money was certainly obtained under false pretenses, the public was certainly lied to. Our right? Correct?

MICHAEL ALBRIGHT,
Stockton.

Editor—Thank you for printing Mr. King's letter. The ferocity with which President Nixon has been attacking the news media is far more disconcerting than Watergate. His office alone, for he is the President of the United States, entitles him to some portion of respect.

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