

What is important about Nixon's speech tonight is not what he says but how it is received. He is pretty much latched to what he has said and being as guilty as anyone can be of more than just the knowledge about which Baker talks he can't very well address the fact. His past and Chotiner's doctrine both say he'll have as little to do with fact as he thinks he can get away with. With Checkers he had to move fast. This time he had more time than he needed, and the time he has used has been for refinement, not drafting. He has bigger advantages than the abundance of adverse fact would lead one to believe. He now knows that nobody is even talking about more than did he know, the lesser crime. On this they are hoping to convince themselves that he didn't, so the stage is properly set for him. He has two readily-available villains, the committee and Dean. I have a hunc that he'll kind of patronize instead of pulling the 20-years-of-treason style. Obviously, he'll have to admit a little of what is known, as with Checkers, so he'll admit that while he was working his head to the bone for the security of the people, making peace for all time in all the world, with his attention and time divided a 10000 times more than any president before him, he was just a wee bit negligent in not finding that 1001 slice. Thus and only this and in this way only must he fault himself and, being the honest, upright man that he is, as the whole world knows, he must admit that it is his fault and his alone for not having detected that he had a rotten apple he didn't smell, indicating at the same time that the odors of steaming rice smothered in a heavy soy and all that beef Strongonoff and strange Russian spices just overwhelmed his nostrils. Not that they wouldn't do this to anyones. Indeed, lesser mortals might have been a little longer recognizing the rotten-apple smell. He can't ditch Ehr and Haldeman and he won't. It is apparent that Ehr is running his interference. He's going to have to take a chance that nobody like Dean has any more of his paper, with goodies like his domestic-spy plan to let out, so he won't make the mistake he then made, not really a mistake because he had to know it was about to surface and he had to explain it in advance. My prediction is that the papers will almost fall over themselves again because they are all terrified, that they will accept the unacceptable, even if with misgivings. Even if expressing these misgivings. The papers are so latched to sources and what they regard as fact that they don't really think. When it was announced that the glorious leader with shre his innermost with us I picked today as the day for this worldshaking event. But as recently as yesterday morning, "ou Cannon in the Post picked tomorrow, with day after and today as alternative (by then there was no choice, these being the only three days of the working week after yesterday). It is not what he says but what he does that tells us what Nixon will do. HW 8/15/73