

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: *Reaction to the President's*



*Post 8/26/73*

## **No Personal Gain?**

The president's statement in his August 22 news conference "Thank God there's been no personal gain involved" clearly indicates that the man is incapable of fathoming the meaning behind Watergate. Assuming by personal gain the President meant material gain, it would certainly have been better for the country to have personal gain involved as alleged in the Agnew investigations rather than to witness the corruption of our constitutional and democratic processes, which must be seen as a far more serious and lasting matter.

TERRY C. PEET

Washington

## **The Right Questions**

One of the few avenues available to the American people for asking their President questions about public policy is through the medium of the press conference. For months President Nixon has avoided holding one of these healthy examinations of issues, perhaps because he feared the questions might just be too hot to handle or perhaps because he feels that the

presidency should be above question from any source. It is well for the body politic and for the office that our leader has come out of hiding, belatedly.

In viewing past press conferences on television, I was always dismayed by the questions which were not asked or by anemic answers which were not challenged, even when they were not factually correct. One of the many healthy benefits stemming from Watergate may be that the press will now treat the incumbent President as merely a fellow man who happens to hold a very high position but who is not above being taken to task for lying to the people, as in the case of respecting Cambodian neutrality, or engaging in improper contact with a judge in mid-trial. I wish to take this opportunity to commend the members of the fourth estate for living up to their potential as good reporters at this recent presidential press conference. For once they asked the right questions. I hope at future press conference they will continue to perform as well.

ERIC COX

New York, N.Y.

## **Favorable Response**

I disagree with you. The President changed my mind and I am delighted to report my reaction favorably. Sorry he did not do it before, but better late than never.

MRS. JAMES PRICE

South Charleston, W.Va.

## **Humiliating Display**

I have never witnessed a more humiliating display than that of our Chief Executive grappling for words in order to explain his naivete in the Watergate break-in, his non-role in the robbery of Mr. Ellsberg's psychiatrist's office, and to express his faith in a vice president presently being investigated by the state he once governed.

I hope the history books can capture the sense of nausea pervading the country today.

KATHRYN KAVANAGH

Washington

## **President Is Innocent**

Mr. Nixon stood before the entire nation and the world and said he was not guilty of the charges being brought against him; and until he stands in the same place and says he WAS guilty, I will believe him. Our country has always presumed a man innocent until proven guilty. Should you not give the President the same benefit of the doubt?

ELIZABETH HUFF

Austin, Tex.

## **Executive Exploits**

In his press conference conducted on August 22, Mr. Nixon indicated that the people who would "exploit" the Watergate issue are those who do not want a "strong America," who do not want "foreign policy leadership," and who do not want to cut down the size of the federal bureaucracy. His judgment is certainly correct. We do not want a strong America if this "strength" is to be obtained by illegal breaking and entering sanctioned by the Executive branch of the government; we do not want the foreign policy "leadership" which is promulgated by the secret bombing of neutral nations; nor do we desire a reduction in the federal bureaucracy if such a reduction entails wiretaps, bug-



## August 22 Press Conference

ging, mistrust of subordinates and surreptitious procedures at all levels of government. Let us hope there will always be such "exploiters" in this nation to counterbalance the effect of those specious and dissembling men who find their way into positions of power.

ALISON M. LAKE

Vienna

### Get Off His Back

Please get off the back of President Richard M. Nixon (on Watergate, et cetera).

You and your anti-patriotic and abrasive hostilities have hurt—and hurt very badly—not only the presidency but our entire nation.

We American people hold you, CBS, The New York Times, Senator Ervin and Archie Cox pretty responsible for all this mad and destructive folly.

Get off it!

R. E. DELMAGE

Canton, N.Y.

### Came Over Candidly

The presidency has been saved, despite the obstinacy of the President.

Though showing many signs of stress and strain, the President came over quite candidly. Though he raised as many questions as he answered, it was a good beginning.

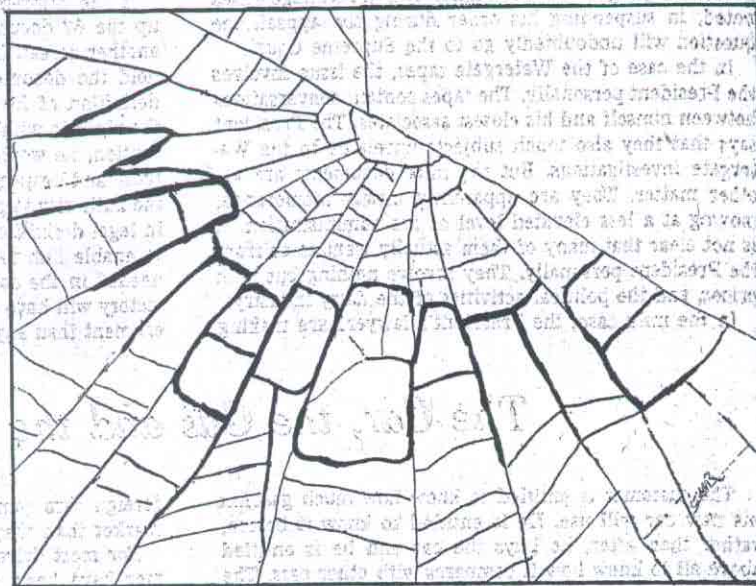
The most negative parts of the news conference came when the President accused R.F.K., J.F.K. and Lydon Johnson of worse excesses than he. Without proof. He still insists that he let Halde-man hear the "one" tape so that he could be sure that the conversation was as he remembered it. Common sense would seem to dictate that the tape should have been played for John Dean in order to refresh his memory and possibly change his "impressions" of the involvement of the President.

EUGENE RICHARDSON

Washington

### Greatest President

I know The Washington Post is not going to like this, but our President did go to China, did go to Russia; did bring the POWs home—with honor and did win the election by a landslide. And you and other liberals can not stand the fact that he accomplished all these things and in so little



By David Gunderson

time. I and many other loyal, thinking Americans predict that Richard M. Nixon will go down as not just one of, but the greatest president in the history of the United States. No matter how hard you may try, you cannot take that away from him and all who have continued to support him.

He will continue to go after unpopular issues, such as the bombing of Cambodia, while you and your "friends" are falling over one another trying to discredit him. You belittle his desperate efforts to stabilize an economy created by a war he did not get the United States involved in. You and your like who cry, "Impeach!" would like nothing better than to see our country in a state of chaos, which is what would happen if President Nixon were to step aside. God Forbid!

MARGERY C. GORDON

Washington

### 'Others Did It'

President Nixon is constantly making references to other administrations that supposedly committed the same (to use his press secretary's word) "felonies" as his own.

To paraphrase him, "Nobody focused

the spotlight on them; why now on me?"

President Nixon is somehow distorting the old adage; two wrongs do not make a right, into, whatever they did, I can do better.

And indeed he probably has, at least in the respect that all wrongdoings his administration has perpetrated have come into the spotlight of publicity.

And interestingly enough, publicity is often given to those with better ideas.

MARK HEGEDUS

Bowie

### Something Must Be Done

After this last press conference, I have come to the conclusion that something concrete has got to be done about our President, if only to advise him that he is just that, a president, and not our king, emperor or dictator. He has used that phrase "his business of running the country" more

times than I care to hear. I gag whenever I hear his lame answers to the pertinent questions being put to him. The release of those tapes could solve an awful lot of problems.

ARLINE MARGOLIS

Rockville