

Dear Jim,

8/23/73

Your letter of 8/20 could not be better timed! That quote from Eleanor will fit perfectly into what I wrote long ago and started reading this morning, only to have to lay it aside because of a number of interruptions.

In it you repeat much of my own thinking and snatches I've written, but you draw succinct and helpful conclusion I had not, so for them also I am grateful.

I'm going at such a pace, trying to do too much, I'm more than usually forgetful. If I had not written to forget my analysis of the indictment, I should have. In rearranging some of the sequence of chapters, I put it up front and did a new one that I'll have already retyped. (I'm three chapters ahead of her in writing, but I've two to read, which often takes more time than writing.) So, I'm returning the memos you sent. I know I did a lengthy one. What I did with it, if I didn't send you a copy, is something now worth forgetting.

Howard left for a vacation on yesterday. Today I got a couple of clips from the Times 8/21, the last until he returns. I have a stack to go over, from him.

We see the N.C. "plot" the same way and for the same reasons. One of the interruptions was a long conversation with the Nat Enquirer, the only publication likely to go for it. Uncertain. Clarence Doucet had a story on this I've not seen Sunday 8/15. They will ask him about it, will also get me the Sturgis/Buchannon indictment (yesterday's Post) and will be in touch. I've shown them six direct parallels with JFK investigation/assassination. If Gaudet is the son of William George, this is really far out! The quote attributed to Gaudet (from the LHO drugstore) is a steal from Ruby, almost word-for-word.

What you say about Agnew has also been on my mind. I think I made a note on this. He is a kind of GL insurance. The one possibility GL omitted on leaks yesterday is that they came from him.

Je's chronology on Betterfield is beautiful. I changed my belief after you first suggested this. My mistakes are always in believing these people not a thoroughly evil as they are. Some time ago I tried to find my copy of the Jencks decision and can't. I presume it is one of the things O & D did not return re proofs Frame-Up.

Editing tapes: what you say was redundant on local and net TV. However, there is a way of escaping the background-noise problem: superimpose a new and constant noise, like music.

If GL didn't resign at the outset, there is no chance at all. I think that if he had met real opposition then, he might have because he might have been forced into it, esp. with Spiro unscathed. Now is he scathed? So, what if he made a liar of his daughter? He has two, hasn't he? And isn't everyone (else) expendable?

On his speech: I have been setting up separate files on each and each statement by or for him. I think the one I'll use is yesterday's. If you don't need both the Post's and the Times' verbatim, would you please mail it? It is much superior to Checkers. It will save me a complicated copying job from the Post, which is over three pages and backs. It was really a virtuoso performance because he had already loaded his pants and because he got away with it. They never laid a hand on him. And all the editors see the emperor fully clothed. I plan what will take some work, bracketing each thing another said with what he said, which will show that either he is a liar or everyone else in the world is. That is not new. The context is. That will have to be toward the end, so no rush.

Where on page 2 you talk of the soil from which opposition must grow, that is what I'm trying to fertilize. I'm really writing the bill of indictment that won't otherwise be. Which makes a real problem in risking slowing down the pace of the book.

Toning down ~~some~~ 8/15 speech: Tv news carried what I've not seen in papers, that the accompanying statement was originally about 16 pages, quartered after drawing.

Hope you saw the press conference yesterday. I saw and heard, separately. Seeing was important, as was that Ziegler push, for which he turned around in genuine anger and walked back for the laying on of both hands. If you had seen Haldeman's face the one time he allowed himself to emote, you'd know that you really understate. These are the most dangerously sick of men. (For which women can be thankful for male chausonist piggery, which saves them.)

As of the first few minutes, I think Rogers eased himself out. "e didn't have to have his first press conference in eons and didn't have to say what crooks GL has. He did it after resigning, and he is an old Nixonian. From GL's ~~past~~ position, he is better off with Superkraut 'ec State, and I don't think the "executive privelege" thing the commentators like Kalb siezed upon will be significant. There are no more secret missions for him, GL gets kike support and Rogers was no real asset. He can't possibly have any domestic successes, so he'll have to concentrate on foreign relations, where it now is not as easy as it was. He'll need a cast-iron gut there.

Je's prescient 8/19: if I didn't send you a carbon, I asked Sussman for a copy of those Ehr notes. We see it identically, and thanks to Je for the systematizing. I'm sending Time's recap on Hunt's blabbing. Please note if you haven't read my letter that the Post's version was incomplete.

The Cubans' complaints about unequal punishment, thanks. Nothing in machistic Post. The name of their lawyer now is familiar, but fuzzy in recollection. They have a legit point, one of the things I had in mind in writing Fiorini. Cesar is to hand-deliver returned letter to Anderson for forwarding. He is getting to see Anderson's assassination file. (Have you noticed Whitten's by-line?)

After a battle with the poinson in the woods, armed with a rotary mower: gave me a little time to think. Superkraut smart move. the Fulbrights will go for it, GL will appear conciliatory, some will take it as contrition and we'll be seeing more of both, esp. if GL, strengthened by fresh blood, decided that the best way to leave WG to the courts says he has said all that can properly be said outside the court, etc.

Had a long phone call from Richard Rye, who is and has been in Frisco, out of the blue. Says he is investigator for the Liberty Lobby. He is the gut through whom the Mafia contract on Garrison story was fed to me via Harv Morgan. He says he thinks Christian is CIA. I don't know his source, but he says he has heard that Hunt and ~~Walt~~ <sup>Liddy</sup> were both in N.O. 5 or 6/63. Somebody is looking past the Glass House. He must have some kind of subsidy for a daytime call or more than 30 minutes.

Watch the GOPs indicted the Dems before Agnew. This whole business, in all its aspects, is designed to destroy any kind of society, any kind of faith in government, to make real GL's argument that everybody does it. Or, why trust anybody? First, before this, the crooked GOPs in the Bloat Agnew dinner falsifications are not indicted, merely name co-conspirators and nobody can go to jail in that deal. Then they dump 30 counts on this guy and his, which will make ~~Agnew~~ Arnew look a little better when he gets it.

Got enough time to get started on the clips before supper and the evening news. ~~Thank~~ Thanks for them. Hope you are getting caught up before the flood. I am reading practically nothing and can't get time to clean up the clips HR sent. I'm enclosing a list of the last two batches. I went over them enough to get the dates. You are right on not needing any except the important ones. I now don't need details except significant ones. By the way, Larry Stern's surgical review of Hunt's masterpiece in today's WxPost strongly suggests Leigh James and his notion, I think.

# HERB CAEN



## The Man in the Glass Cage

"ARE YOU GOING to watch 'To Tell the Truth' tonight?" smiled the receptionist in the doctor's office Wednesday afternoon. For a second I didn't get it. Then I nodded as a man in a corner of the waiting room grunted "more like 'Admission Impossible.'" Chase Webb had already sent a kite my way reading "No matter what President Nixon says tonight he is certain to go down in history . . ."

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AS 6 P.M. approached, I got butterflies in the stomach (imagine what Mr. Nixon was going through, his final dusting of makeup being applied at that very moment). Would it be another "Checkers" embarrassment, or would it be the so-called Real Nixon, eyes cold, jaw set in firm resolve, lashing out at his enemies, or would it be just more of the Old Nixon Doubletalk, the words going around in circles to dizzy the listener? At 6, the sort of dumb but honest face of John Chancellor appeared, followed by the Great Seal. Who always follows the seal act in a circus? Bring on the jugglers!

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OUTSIDE THE WINDOW, the August fog was streaking past, an appropriate backdrop for the cloudy words to follow. Mr. Nixon faced the camera, a small brave smile on his lips. With his Gallup at around 30 per cent approval, you had to feel sorry for him. "Why is he always EXPLAINING something?" I had written about Mr. Nixon a decade ago, and here he was explaining again, earnestly. My thoughts raced back to Eleanor Roosevelt, visiting her friend, Mayris Chaney, in Mayris' apartment in Alta St. on Telegraph Hill. "The trouble with Mr. Nixon," Mrs. Roosevelt said at one point, "is that he has no convictions, absolutely none" . . . Not yet, at any rate.

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THE WORDS DRONED ON, those slippery words so hard to get a grip on. Mr. Nixon is said to edit his own speeches; perhaps he is the one responsible for inserting all the adjectives that water down the nouns, a shrewd move (as Voltaire once said, "the adjective is the enemy of the noun"). At one point, in a startling example of nature following art, he sounded like David Frye doing his Nixon imitation. ("As President," goes a Frye routine, "I accept full responsibility for Watergate. But not the blame. Today I have fired 5732 of the finest public servants I have ever known.")

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MR. NIXON'S FACE flickered and changed col-

or was to blame. A sudden thought flickered, too: Tuesday, August 14, marked the 28th anniversary of V-Day, ending World War II, but nobody noticed, nobody remembered, perhaps nobody cared . . . I stared ahead as he pursed his lips primly over a schoolmasterish phrase. What an enigma, this Whittier boy with Quakerish background. Why is he now so fond of pomp of office and panoply of luxurious houses? He looks to be a much more austere person even plain, and yet he loves brass fanfares at his appearances and designed, personally. Palace Guards and the world laughed him out of it. He has a sense of humor, there is no record of it. In fact, if it is not apparent. If he actually believes what he is saying, he is not convincing.

\* \* \*

ALL, you say to yourself; **there's Russia, China, the end of the war in Indochina, no matter how reluctantly wound down by this man in the glass cage.** A few hours earlier I had picked up my copy of the London Sunday Times at the newsstand near Gray and Mason. Inside, there was a photo of a weeping Cambodian man, 10 of whose 11 children had been killed in the "mistake" bombing of the town of Neak Luong by American B-52s. As the President spoke, no remorse in his voice, only self-righteousness, I stared at the photo and then at this statement by Colonel David H. E. Opfer, the U.S. Air Attache in Cambodia: Asked about the Neak Luong tragedy, the Colonel said, "I saw one stick of bombs through the town, but it was no great disaster" . . . You couldn't help wondering what Colonel Opfer would call it if a string of bombs fell through his home town, by mistake, delivered by an invisible enemy against a blameless people . . . Are Colonel Opfer's words the real Voice of America?

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"NO AMNESTY," Mr. Nixon said of those who expressed their opposition to the Indochina war by fleeing this country, and here, Wednesday night, was Mr. Nixon asking for amnesty, a word he should be able to live with since it means to forget, not to forgive. Forget Watergate and get on with the real problems, he was saying . . . We have been living with them for so long—forever, even if you go all the way back to Coolidge and he was no bargain. There's a new film around called "American Graffiti" that purports to tell us of the "carefree innocence of the early 1960s, mind you, when the world was reeling under the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban missile crisis and an undeclared war in Vietnam that was growing— . . . All of us should pray for amnesty, no matter what our position on that war . . ."

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WEDNESDAY NIGHT, FOR the first time since the "carefree innocence" of John F. Kennedy's era, no American planes were dropping bombs anywhere in the world. So far as we knew. We lifted a tentative toast to the Secretary of the Air Force who hadn't known we were bombing Cambodia, and shakily to peace in what is left of our time. At 9 p.m., KQED replayed the Nixon speech, preempting "You Can Help—Throw It Here," a documentary on the

20 August 1973

Dear Harold:

If we've been poor correspondents recently it's because since the hearings recessed we've been trying to get caught up a bit both inside and outside the house. In the meantime we've tried to send along anything from the local papers which might provide a crumb of information you might not otherwise see. We've tried to keep it to a minimum, knowing the tremendous amount of stuff you're already handling and that you're trying to write at the same time. Several days ago we sent a large envelope along which included an issue of Rapparts. It appeared to have several stories which might be of interest to you.

On Agnew's miseries, we always return to our first reaction, which was that the investigation of his affairs could not have been developed without at least the assent of this administration. GL's precise motives still aren't clear, but it seems safe to postulate that if Agnew has been his insurance against assassination he now can serve as the same sort of insurance to discourage impeachment. Not that I expect that to happen, but the possibility may loom larger in certain minds than it ~~seems~~ does in mine.

The same factor -- the necessity of at least assent -- was present in Butterfield's disclosure of the ~~the~~ existence of the tapes. Disclosure was necessary in order to counter Dean's accusations through Haldeman, and to open up the possibility of invoking Jencks-Brady to get all the WH hands off without long-term imprisonment and available later on when things cool down, if they ever do.

Incidentally, I suppose you noticed that Haldeman said he had the tapes in his possession for at least 48 hours or thereabouts, in any case for two nights. Due to his well-known home movie addiction, he's no doubt an experienced cutter and splicer, and easily could have cut unwanted portions from the tapes even if he had no expert help, such as Al Wong of the Secret Service. As I understand it, it is comparatively easy to edit such tapes and do it without danger of detection by the inexperienced listener. I've heard one real expert claim that it is virtually impossible for a genuine expert to be fooled, however, if he has the right equipment to detect small changes in background levels etc.

On the whole I agree with you that Nixon really has little choice but to tough it out and fight it out, and that, as you put it, counterattack is his natural method. With Congress in no mood to impeach, it thus promises to become an extended contest of wills and stamina, and such a contest can be greatly influenced by other developments such as inflation, and possible foreign emergencies either real or fabricated. Nixon's apparent hope, therefore, must be to fight it out, delay as much as possible in the courts, and hope to last until 1976 when he can dust off his plans to take over by proclamation, meanwhile gradually rehiring such characters as Haldeman and Ehrlichman, both of whom act as though they were still on the White House payroll. The paper plans are intact, some of them still in effect actually. We do not believe Nixon can stand the thought of resigning -- it's just unthinkable to him in any realistic sense -- and he's gambling that Congress never will bring itself to impeach him.

There's a factor operating with both Haldeman and Ehrlichman which no one has dealt with, although the fact that both are Christian Scientists has been mentioned often. No one is willing to discuss the effect of a religion, of course. However, unless one has had direct experience with this particular breed there is no way of realizing the peculiar facility it imparts to some personalities wherein it enables them to believe, absolutely, in anything they want to believe. This is not always the case, but in the aggressive type it often is literally true. Just as the Jesuits used to justify everything in their particular way, so do those Christian Scientists where their particular system of ~~the~~ rationalization ~~is~~ proves to be vitally handy. Ehrlichman's wrath at Congressional drunks is a sure sign that he's using the system to help justify his own actions. Haldeman is a deeper problem -- he's wise enough to lay off the moralizing -- but his singleminded purpose is again an indication that this peculiar system of belief has contributed to his total dynamic. In these two cases, anyway, "Gott mit uns" didn't die with the last Hohenzollern.

How about the others who weren't helped along by their particular religious beliefs? The GL, as Herb Caen points out in the enclosed column quoting Eleanor Roosevelt, has no belief in anything, so he is unencumbered in that sense. He goes after what he wants for himself without the aid of any system of thought. But the others: I like von Hoffman's phrase of corporate Stalinism, the ideology of the big business firm, exacerbated by the huge and often internally contradictory demands of the conglomerate, wherein absolutist rule is the only feasible solution, with underlings expected to obey without ~~question~~ and even to take the blame for the mistakes of their superiors in the name of personal or team loyalty. This was transplanted to the WH in the name of a business administration (for which read Byzantium am Potomac), again as the only viable solution to the problems of getting anything done in an atmosphere of secrecy, grandiose schemes and the ever-present paranoia. The total amorality borrowed at the same time from business (most of our laws, I suspect, are aimed at trying to get business to behave itself) was perhaps the fatal defect in the whole system, for it was the gutter morality of advertising and the PR agent, perhaps the very worst ~~form~~ of the dubious morals of competitive business, which led to the excesses, the mistakes, the ghastly contradictions between the professions and the actual practices of the administration.

I'm taking this backward look at what I consider to be the origins of WG et al because this background provides the soil from which any real opposition to Nixon must come. In other words, he is a product and extension of the system which now must decide whether to condemn him and, eventually, toss him out. This leaves us with a stalemate which he recognizes and on which he is basing his strategy and tactics. That he is reacting systematically is indicated by this morning's report of the alleged assassination plot in New Orleans (which the cops said they'd known about for a week). It was inevitable that at some stage or other he would use such a ploy in an effort to regain his image as a dramatic figure, and the fact that it's trotted out now suggests that it was brought on by the way Checkers III landed with a dull thud on Aug. 15.

(Harry Jupiter, an old AP colleague now on the Chronicle, turned in probably the best sample reaction to that speech to Herb Caen. Harry was sampling reaction to the speech in a Mission St. bar while it was still in progress. He saw a woman nodding and smiling as Nixon spoke, and asked if he could take her picture. Her husband answered for her: "I think not. My wife loves Nixon but she don't understand English too good.")


In other words, the speech, which already was toned down to a second Checkers rerun simply because he could not afford to discuss anything in detail because of the questions details would raise, satisfied no one but those already satisfied with GL, so to recoup, the assassination plot was dusted off. One wonders if the entry used was one contributed originally by E. Howard Hunt.

Returning to the question of Agnew, several recent references to Kissinger becoming Secretary of State within a month or six weeks (or after the Colson, Young and possibly Hunt testimony is got out of the way) suggests that something will have to be arranged for Bill Rogers. Note the enclosed Examiner clipping on the 25th Amendment, which gives Nixon the authority to appoint a successor to the vice president should that worthy resign. In this light, Agnew may find he has no choice but to resign, which would enable Nixon to appoint Rogers to succeed Agnew and move Kissinger into the State Department. Henry might go for it because he wants to get out of the WH and away from Watergate. Nothing basically would be disturbed, the stalemate could continue indefinitely, and plans for 1976 gradually could be revitalized as we all ride bravely forward together into the future and/or sunset. If worst comes to worst and public outrage forces the system to demand Nixon's own resignation, it can be done less uncomfortably with Rogers waiting in the wings than with Agnew, simply because W Rogers is more reliable from Nixon's standpoint. Viewed from any standpoint, including Nixon's, Rogers is a more presentable candidate to replace Agnew than anyone else we've been able to think of. If worst does not come to worst, Nixon can hang on, with Rogers, presumably with less fear of being knifed in the back than he could with Agnew remaining as vice president.

All in all, the attempted assassination ploy is probably a very accurate index to how low Nixon thinks his status has fallen in the public esteem, but it does not mean he sees any course open to him except to keep on toughing it out. It's a low key beginning along another of his imitative tactical ventures, and if he thinks it is useful the next one might be a little more exciting, but not much.

We join you in looking forward, etc, etc. etc.

Best,



jdw