

Impressions of Nixon's 10/26/73 press conference.

Before it started I told Lil the press still would not be able to handle him or to prevent his using them. Apropos of this I wonder if his excesses will make up for it in negative reaction to him.

His attack on the media was predictable. + believe the WH is over-confident because of what he has gotten away with, coupled with ditto for Buchanan, Ehrlichman and Haldeman and their fascist lawyer, Wilson. Because his attack on the media as irresponsible was predictable, there might well have been an explosion if someone had asked him, "Do you think the charge, repeated over and over again, against President Truman and Ambassador Stevenson of 20 years of treason was responsible?" The awkward formulation to give him less time to get it. A few of these and I think he'd blow. I think he came close each of the last times, with apprehension, excitement or both visible.

His resort to the press-conference formula is because he requires an adversary and can't keep on saying how wonderful he is in a speech when there is so little about which he can proclaim his genius of his accomplishments.

He gave still a new, I think fourth, contradictory "explanation" of the Rebozo/Hughes deal, and that can be used to confront Rebozo if he is ever under oath.

Another of the kids of questions that could be asked of him once he made the character of what was said and in context persecution of him the issue: Abplanalp - he said he would build a \$10,000,000 11-story whorehouse on his San Clemente land. Does GL consider this the kind of desirable neighbor he was seeking?

A few choice quotes from Ehrlichman and Haldeman, not forgetting Ehr saying that Nixon had advance knowledge of the "Lasberg break-in. Let these two confront incourt, too.

He made speeches in non-answer to some questions, so + presume he decided in advance what he wanted to say and said it when he thought he wanted to.

Somebody could have fun bracketing his bragging about getting cooler as things get hotter by quoting his own earlier self-analysis, beginning with Ike/Checkers. nobody will.

He has, I believe, been abusing his good luck and the natural sympathy the people usually have for a President. The average person will not believe that anyone is as good as he keeps on saying he is. I think also that his constant bad-mouthing of the media will react against him. I know of no net commentator who has said what he attributed to an unnamed one, and if each were to make formal demand of him to specify they could give him what he asked for.

He misused and misrepresented the Cox vs Ervin-Baker arrangement on the tapes and the decision, which I think can be used against him.

My hunch is that he has not helped himself with Congress tonight. That is where he now needs help. He certainly didn't help himself when a majority of the Senate of both parties asked for an independent prosecutor and he says they "will" accept his plan for his prosecutor, who will not ask him for what he doesn't want to come out.

He realized during the following question that he had gone too far in saying a) he is not angry at the media and b) you have to respect someone to be angry. First of all, it is not true, and secondly, it was far too excessive.

NBC-TV reported at the end, as the reporters were leaving, there was widespread head-shaking, in the sense of disbelief. A few more of these and there will be little doubt that he is not rational.

He staged a deal in remarkably poor taste yesterday and got away with it. I saw and heard no comment of any kind. He had himself photographed running up the steps of the EOB, all by himself. In the long lens, no Secret Service agent visible in the shot. This is proof that it was staged. They are not far from him inside the building (Butterfield). Why does he have to do this kind of childish thing? He has to prove even that he can move without assistance? Why the hell should a President run up steps? Terrible as his p.r. people are, I don't think any of them dreamed that one up.

At one point it looked as though Mollenhoff was going to get thrown out. Two men converged on him from opposite sides. Then when Nixon recognized him, Nixon began with a gratuitous insult...No audible "Thank you, r. P" or "Good night" HW 10/26/73