

Dear Jim,

Schweiker and

7/26/76

Not long after you phoned we had a visit from a fine young woman buff friend and her mother and aunt. They were less than 200 miles away so they dropped in for supper and a visit.

You remembered my telling Schweiker that he wrote a crooked report to become vice president. I don't think I sent you his confirmation. It is about this that I wrote Ron. If there is no compromise for me, no conflict, I think even less of a Reagan candidacy now that my forecast turns out to have been as understated as it was accurate.

This letter can ruin Schweiker and Reagan with him. Note the date--this month! I heard NBC's treatment after you phoned. It was amateurish, in terms of the election. Nonsense. Reagan is grasping for the nomination first and if Schweiker can turn a few Penna, N.J. and other electors in his area, perhaps New England, he can pull it for Reagan. If he does not turn off Reagan's mainstay of ultras.

Reagan's reasoning is sound. Remember I told you Ford would be shrewd to have Schweiker with him. Well, Schweiker must have listened to me and remembered when he heard from Reagan.

When I heard Schweiker on NBC I started the letter to Ron. I have not read it. It may be too elliptical. I finished it while the guests were finishing supper.

I'm not about to undertake an exploitation, but what a one it could be!

I do not believe that the chances of eliminating my conflict are promising. That's a joke, so, if you remember the old radio phrase.

And there is no way I would turn 1448 around. In fact, you'll have done the filing before you see this.

When I finish a drink - my guests left suddenly when one started to yawn and they have a long drive in the a.m. - I'm going to bed. I don't know if I'll stay awake long enough to think about this. My instinct tells me that if Reagan were not desperate he'd never have done this; if Schweiker did not feel like a use (misused) woman he'd have had no part of it; and it may very well kick back on them both.

I also think neither can make it.

It does make for a more than merely interesting situation, for now.

I was unaware of the development until a few minutes before you phoned. I'd worked in the house and then outside and heard no news since morning.

Disgusted as I was by what I perceived, I think accurately, Schweiker was up to, that is haught compared to this switch. Rottener political opportunism I do not recall. Just compare what he wrote me three weeks ago with today's posture.

If you want to use my letters, feel free. Only not Schweiker's. There will be time for that. And if political expediency would prompt a mea culpa I think I'd be pleased.

This sort of puts Mark, Bud et al in Reagan's bed. That is where the brilliant ones belong. Since his report Mark has been vocal in endorsement of him. A bit convoluted, since Mark said what the report does not, but specific enough. I have it.

It is all so crazy!

But I am happy for 1448 and what you will have filed before you see this. Real happy.

Happy enough to predict that Dick does not become vice president.

My hunch is that the Reagan ploy is a bit raw. I do expect tomorrow's news to reflect a substantial negative reactions. And that there are not many in any Schweiker constituency he can deliver to a Reagan. He'll have hurt himself, for the future.

Bedfellows sure make strange politics!

Best,