

Dear Js,

5/5/73

Chicago is coming in with some clarity this morning but their news is local and ugly, so I'm not up to date on the latest WG developments, if any. I expect some from the disappearance of Egil Krogh (not pronounced "Crow", as the newscasters do it) and the expetable development of the whole kind of operation typified by the Ellsberg breakin. Had I not been preoccupied with other things I'd have realized as soon as that broke that the story ought now take on significant sidelights. With not enough time for other work before the paper comes, I thought about this while shaving and making the coffee and mate.

I am not yet prepared to presume the probability of an official spookery connection with Nixon's Keystone Gestapo. However, these are guys whose lives were spent with the FBI and CIA, and I think it not unlikely they were able to make alliances on the operating level and to get help, including technical help.

If my reasoning is correct, then it may soon be looking like an FBI or CIA job when it really wasn't. This may, in fact, obliterate before it is all over.

The last thing I heard on the radio last night is that Nixon had again invoked executive privilege. This is so irrational and stupid that I think more than what I have said in the past, that he is not in control, despite the outward appearance of calm (and there were outward signs of other than inner tranquility). I think he is close to hysterical. If this privilege existed, and it doesn't, then the individual has to allege or claim or attempt to assert it and it is up to each body before which the effort is made to respect or ignore it. It amounts to another confession of guilt, and I do not mean on the coverup alone but of some kind of participation. The most he can do is direct those he regards as his close advisers to invoke the claimed privilege. Clark Mollenhoff has recently established that the adviser can tell GL to go to and not assert the claim.

When GL reasserts this fiction is also significant. It is when his own dirty workings are coming out. He is involved in the contamination of Judge Byrne. This could not have been the mere sounding out by Ehrlichman. GL was corrupting the judge in person.

I got interesting characterizations of two men recently. Krogh is described as a very bright, very personable, very human and decent young man. Schlesinger is described as a very bright, quite dedicated and also human manager, a real brain. My source is one whose beliefs are anything but Nixonian, a professional bureaucrat who knows these men personally and well and has worked with them closely. If I wanted to see Schlesinger he knows him well enough to pick up the phone and reach him. In fact, he offered to.

There is this story on what led to the rather violent replacement of Helms. It is quite separate from Schlesinger's testimony about old men and having to get rid of them. (I suggest that what he really means is not that they are old but that he wants different political thoughts in their heads.) As Kennedy had, Nixon had issued some orders he assumed would be carried out. They were not. Had to do with curtailing the size and cost of the spook establishment because of the changes in technology. He was in this case right. Several times he learned it had not been done, so he gave the orders again. Each time his functionaries were given the traditional explanations. Then there came a time when there was an upheaval in some small country where there was or could have been some jeopardy to, I think, oil supply. He called the boys in and said he'd been reading his intelligence briefings with care, had read about all sorts of things that had been inconsequential, but he had seen nothing remotely indicating any development like this. And this was the kind of development the President had to be able to anticipate and cope with. How come? That did it. He blew.

I think we now see why there has been no leak of the Hunt grand-jury testimony. He is talking and saying what it does not suit the leakers to leak. In turn, this convinces me all over again that all the leaks have been purposeful and official. It is also a kind of news management, but in this case by conflicting and competitive interests....

In your 4/26 note you ask about the WxPost's columnists. I should have done this long ago. Regulars are Alsop, Kraft, Anderson, Evans-Novack, von Hoffman, Buchwald. Irregulars Fritchey, Braden, Roche, locals, Crawford, Marder (both semi-retirement).

Back to WG: The word that the plumbers were on the job did stop the leaks because everyone was afraid to use his phone. If Krogh is as described to me, he'll sing when he realizes what he has done and been part of. He was a Plumber, supervising.

I don't see Newsweek, do get TIME. Check on not taping PBS. I've sent clip on TV.

Your later 4/26 on Hearst's incredible dereliction in leaving his world without GUIDANCE must be an exceptional event. Typical except that right has been louder than the liberal press in condemnation, as Star compared with Post. Best, HW