

7/25/71

Dear Js,

Typewriter fixed, I hope, mail heavy with some remaining from yesterday, and the pressing thing I indicated, of which I may enclose enough to inform you if I can get to it today, I've separated your three mailings of the 20 into the letter, the notes, the clips separate from the affs, which will have to wait until I go through the others. The Penn thing is as sick as usual. It is not Alexander and would seem to be impossible for it to be Wilteer, unless the other things we know of his whereabouts are wrong. Wilteer is loaded and there would seem to be no reason for him to be so dressed. Goddamned ribbon still works its way through at the end when it shouldn't. Have you had this problem with yours? This is the first typing I've done since repair a few minutes ago, and it happened. Anyway, I'll read and respond to the letter simultaneously and go over the other things after I catch upon other mail.... Glad to have Jones' picture. I've seen it before, don't recall where.

On adm. objectives: it is the entire hearland of the south at least, in narrow political terms, as I see it, and more than this kind of political objective. I had heard that Gervais said he decided to work with gov't because son is prisoner, did not know the source was Wall, and don't believe it. I do not believe his son was captive when last I spoke to him, but it is entirely inconsistent with what he then said about the character of the war and the gov't, and I have yet to be persuaded that Po's role in this is as completely understood as it might be. I am full of respect for his keenness, his intelligence, his cunning, and his scrupulous unscrupulousness. I also think that by and large he'd live by the code of not peaching. Sp, what was he going to do, say "I'm a rat"? We'll have to wait on that one, but your general comment on the type of thinking is consistent with my observations in that area.

Brener's book: I don't know him but have understood he is bright, competent and determined. What you suspect is consistent with something Louis Ivon told me about it, that he suspected Richard Townley had done it. Rick was back in N.O. for the time that coincides with the probably time of composition.

I don't know why you don't have TV, but for years I refused to. I know the general problems of reception there. I also know some things are on TV that are not on radio or in print, some of which we catch. Should you ever decide to get one, from a recent experience this advice: We have a rather good "family" set because we also live in mts and a fringe area, the closest station more than 40 miles away. We have a large mast, two very good aerials, etc, and when it was working, a device for rotating. We were given one of the earlier portables with separate battery-pack, intended for use at beaches, in the car, etc. I have a temporary rack for using it at the foot of our bed for the rare times we want to look at something abed, like the rare good old movie, news, appearances on late talk shows, etc. I have two of the cheapest aerials, rabbit ears for VHF and a bow tie for UHF and we get as good a signal on most VHF stations and a better one and more stations on UHF on that portable! I think it is in the extra r.f. end of the set, necessary for real portability. And, moving a set a small distance can be critical and make a vast difference. I have learned that on UHF height is not as significant as theory says.

Agree on Nixon and crisis. He is in real trouble and he knows it, and he has a gnaw, no exaggeration to consider him Nixon's Nixon, waiting for a snap at the jugular. There is a big difference between saying anything to get to be President and then being President and having to cope with real problems and suddenly finding out that being an opportunist ignorant may whose success comes from copying the successful, lack of scruple and cottoning to the right wrong just doesn't get anything done. He is, I think, a really desperate man. Confession: I had not noticed his use of the proper name of Mainland China, the real China. However, I feel, without knowing, that none of the initiative was his. I do not know of a single original thing he has ever done, or a single imaginative one.... I don't think Laos was to teach the military, which is possible. I think from the first he has been preparing at the very least to remain in S.E. Asia after leaving VN. Read his early stuff, esp when he went on that trip that took him to Thailand. He mortgaged himself to every two-bit fascist stooge, nothing any sensible pro ever does. And needlessly. He boxed himself in.

Schuman is without doubt right, my sole question being degree. And the teaching of the lesson could be the CIA ploy. Back to Dulles, who was a success because he was always wrong about everything.

However, I do not believe the leak of the Pent Papers was an agency job. They are sophisticated enough for it, but I think it directed thinking and action where they really do not want it. I think the three parts of the CIA-military-industrial complex, as I retitled it in draft COUP, requires all parts to be sound, like mind in body. Unless they are stupid, more so than I think.

Ping-pong diplomacy: I think there was no question of support inside China, but that had the government there had any question they'd have done it anyway if they considered time right. I think they timed it with Nixon's problems, figuring he needed straws for grasping, and our negotiations with USSR sweetened for them. Plus we have this big VN problem. The mood of this country has long been for major change, so Nixon, save with his best backers, was bound to be supported. The problem for him is that he is approved by those with no reason to support him and disapproved by those who have. And are undermined by their support by his agreement.

Kissinger secrecy exceptional, agreed. Secret even from Spiro, who doesn't like. He suddenly thinks he has big briches. What I haven't yet figured is how approaches were handled outside channels in this leakproof way, of which modern government permits few. Agreed on the source and extent of his problem, and he is now pretty much in the position JFK was beginning end 62 and more last half 63. He threatens the unthinking dedicated wrong. And they can do to him what you indicate. However, I think that at this point the money as opposed to the industrial interest have enough heft with the press for it to be resisted, perhaps exposed, one of the reasons I think CIA leaking PPs not likely. Not lemmings.

Be patient on reaction. He has yet to reach agreement with China and get it accepted. They are not about to give up at the conference table what we could not get by war, even if they could. They will not surrender Taiwan will not agree to our presence on the mainland anywhere, will not agree to naval presence but might pretend it does not exist, so what does Nixon have except unsuccessful negotiations? He is the kind of character who could parlay that into electoral value and recapture some of his disappearing support that way.

Der Spiegel and Kissinger: makes sense. His public records confirms your friend.... Did you catch Cavett's wonderful line on this, I wonder whose Kissinger now? when he was away from DC? Regardless of what kind of feline he is, he is out of his depth once he gets where the President's weight can't help push him. He can do nothing but capitulate to Chinese, and can you picture this? Or anyone else negotiating? And most of the world is close to revolt against us and our policies. Your following opinion of the Chinese mind is quite credible on the record I know, and you are the Chatterboxes who was here. Or were you there when this was a famous, stupid radio weekly gag that gagged everybody into stitches? They are also independent and determined, as Mao's refusal to cotton to the Stalinists of both countries shows, and have the capability of fighting for their beliefs against incredible odds.... I don't know what I was thinking of about Howard, that is, do not recall what he said, but the initiative at the ping-pong table is obvious, and that is enough for me. Whether they continued it diplomatically is not as significant, for that more opened all others, and Nixon could hardly have condemned it publicly, or to have refused to go further afterwards, the step he took being the obvious and necessary, the alternative being their exposure of his unwillingness to talk. And, did they not extend an invitation to him? I think he also recalls how much good Khrushchev's trip here did Ike.

I'm answering as I read, and you come to price, which I addressed above. We agree. Your point on the announcement: I think Nixon is much more separate than shows, and what could he have done, let the awful reds announce it first? And take the play away from him. They were courteous to permit him this victory, and do they have any reason to like Demos better? You see, this all advances peace in the east, their major objective, whichever party is in power. I think this answers your next par, why they bother. As long as we have uninformed uniformed zanies all over that part of the world, it can go into flames at any moment. I'd be shocking you on this point in TIGER. Their's is not domestic problems, except for expenditures they have to make they'd prefer to direct into domestic needs. Again you carry further what I said on liquidation of adventure, and again we are agreed. The real problem here is how to prevent utter chaos and perhaps revolution because despite all the lies, it is a war economy and there has never been any real planning for change from it. Worse, Nixon has always been the improviser, never having the brains to be more.

"Partial isolation" Remember, I said we always repeat the same mistakes. This is what unified the people of the USSR behind Stalin. And it also requires resourcefulness and dedication for survival, so we always help our "enemies" and never learn.

I think they see little choice between a Nixon or an HHH or LBJ or McG, for all ours have essentially the same problems and limited choices. They may, indeed, anticipate the same very serious developments here I do, which means that they deal with whoever is going to be hurt in their own self-interest. As I read I see we again are agreed, your description, "another hairy barbarian".

I digress for a moment to note what to me is one of the more impressive signs of the popular support of their people, the basic changes they have been able to bring about in such things as sexual activity. That means the people must be in solid accord with official thinking to the point of real sacrifice and positive determination. I know of no parallel in history, government's or man's.

I think your analysis, what Nixon needs for 1972, etc., too narrow. It is correct, but it is true of everyone who can be the candidate of any party except those much to the right ~~xxx~~ of any Nixon (meaning whichever one of the real ones many characters he is in at any one time—you ought to read a speech on intellectual freedom he made during the Ike years at Franklin-Marshall College in Pa., and try to imagine this is any one of the many other real Richard Nixons. My own opinion of the Chinese position is that they may ~~ix~~ decide and probably will to agree to what they can agree to and just ignore what they can't agree to, believing, I think correctly, that any American President needs of them whatever he can get. There is nothing real, short of total disarmament that the USSR will not now agree to, that any president can get from the USSR. Our greatest blunder was not to take Khrushchev's offer on this....Of your what follows, I agree with the military part. That is Nixon's real worry, real problem, aside from the first real, lone, unassisted nut. All of whom are on the side he has had supporting him. Isolation: agreed, again.... I'd never before heard of the wise Sun Tze...And one factor you have not considered is the coming very real and quite insoluble problem in the eastern Mediterranean. Both sides have made that insoluble, us and the USSR and the Arab propaganda. Israel has no choice, as Sun Tze reminds me, for she can't survive the loss of a single battle. What outrages every major power is that a nation less populous than metropolitan Philadelphia is practicing what they have always practiced and is so disdainful of their opposition that she doesn't even both to claim the gander's sauce....This is a problem for every major country except China, and for all small ones not near China. What you tell me of Chinese thinking and attitudes is very helpful to my understanding. What little contact I have had with Chinese is not enough to tell me these things, though I have profited a bit by reading. And I am the one who resurrected Evans Fordyce Carlson from oblivion (and had the movie Gung Ho. stolen from my work!)... The one thing you have not addressed is no less exceptional: the ability to conceive the impossible and the capacity to bring it off. Like the great March. Yet they also produced the Chiang of 1927, what was also the Chiang of the kidnapping, and the Chiang who broke ~~x~~ that word. And bravery. I was doing news, a one-, an staff just before they took all. What went entirely unnoted was the number of entire armies that deserted as soon as we moved them, trained and armed, from Formosa. From the lowest private to the top general, all, and with our stuff.

Frey: I notice immediately, and I always felt somebody was out to get Haggerty because he was fair in presiding and because he decided the way he did on two vital issues, the Z film and the question of Dallas evidence (where I happen to have disagreed with him as a matter of law after the trial got started)....RB-47: I wonder more and more about that source and his dependability and whether he could have authored a certain message!

Think I'll read the clips next, so I can be up to date in anything happens. It will not be possible to begin writing today anyway, and getting the letters all done is the same on a Saturday to DC, the imp. ones, as ~~ix~~ on Friday. Thanks, Best,

17july71

Dear Harold:

With yours of the 16th and 17th at hand, I'll put down down a few ideas that have occurred to us.

Glad to have your assessment of Garrison's position; we too felt it was perfect for that setting, that he knows his Southerners. This supports what I take to be your general theory that the target is much bigger, perhaps a general discrediting of the whole Democratic apparatus in Louisiana if not in the entire south. Agnew's role as the spearhead of Nixon's southern strategy may have changed somewhat, but the target may remain the same: destroy southern liberalism along with all other kinds of liberalism. It has seemed clear to us, too, that Agnew was visiting New Orleans with suspicious frequency. In any case the withered hand of rightwing chauvinism is apparent in the whole case, perhaps best ~~exemplified~~ exemplified in a clipping we are sending you. In it John Wall makes the statement that Gervais decided to work with the government because his son was a prisoner of the North Vietnamese. To us this speaks eloquently of the mentality at work.

Regarding Milton Brener's book, we always have had the impression that it was ghosted for him. It doesn't read like a lawyer writing, in fact is quite polished, reading more like something written by a pro who is used to working up slick jobs for LIFE or the Saturday Evening Post.

Your theory of federal haste in breaking the charges against Garrison coincides with one we have been developing about the announcement of the Peking trip. They may not be unrelated in that both are part of some overall plan.

We don't have television and neither of us saw Nixon make the announcement. But we taped it from radio, and both thought we detected a certain extra tension in his voice. Maybe a Seventh Crisis? Our net impression is that he may have felt pushed as to the timing. He was going for broke, but he has known that for a year if not longer. We feel he was doing it sooner than he had planned.

It was roughly a year ago that Nixon first used the proper name for the Chinese government, the Peoples Republic of China, in a speech at a dinner in Bucharest, Romania. His press aides made certain that Romanian newsmen noticed it but did not bother to make the same point to American or western newsmen, none of whom reported it at the time as far as I know. He first used it ~~in this country~~ in a speech in this country in February, ~~when~~ at which time it WAS remarked by American newsmen. This was the same month in which the Laos invasion bogged down and had to be rescued at great cost.

The real purpose of the Laos invasion is, or can be, very important. One interpretation possible is that it was a lesson to the military. Okay, you wanted to do it your way. You have had your chance, and we all know what happened.

The other day Franz Schurman of UC, co-author of The Politics of Escalation, developed an interesting idea. He said that the people who really control the American government, regardless of which administration or party is in power, had decided that the military way demonstrably had failed and that therefore it had been determined to revert to the former policy of covert action via the CIA and other pipelines. If he is right, then the idea of teaching the military a lesson by letting them do their thing and learn the hard way fits right in, and finds further support in the idea that one of the purposes of the Pentagon Papers leak was to demoralize the military, to show them who is running the show and who can blackmail them with more Pentagon Papers any time the military feels like inviting blackmail.

In any case, we now come to the Ping Pong diplomacy bit in April, which can be seen as a sort of trial balloon in both China and the United States to see how the public would react to a relaxation of the hostility that has dominated the policy of both countries for more than 20 years. In China, no sweat. People appeared delighted. And in this country, the response was almost as favorable.

The next major development was the leak of the Pentagon Papers, and in the uproar that followed Nixon sent Laird, Agnew, Rogers and perhaps even Helms ~~to~~ ^{with} Kissinger to explain things to our assorted allies and hangers-on. During this fast shuffle Kissinger traded places with a double in Pakistan and got away on his trip to Peking, which appears to have been kept secret from the military, and one has to feel that only one agency could have arranged that.

Kissinger returns, and after a very short interval indeed Nixon goes on nationwide TV and radio and drops his little bombshell. I repeat, he did NOT sound triumphant. He sounded edgy. We agree with you that he should, and feel the relative ~~silence~~ ^{silence} from the right is ~~ominous~~ ^{ominous}. Not just for him, a potential target. The same people that brought us the Gulf of Tonkin incident could produce just as easily a Gulf of Chihli incident or some other outrage to trigger a fatal American response against that favorite bogey of the right, Red China and its Communist hordes, precisely the threadbare justification for any American adventure which Nixon now proposes to junk.

Our initial reaction was just what you'd expect -- fury that this jackal who has done as much or more than anyone to create and perpetuate the myth of Red China's aggressive belligerency is now using it for his own ends, proposing to emerge a hero by liquidating a threat that all along has been artificially contrived..

Even a jackal has gall, but you correctly see in this gambit a daring that is atypical of our glorious leader. The question is whether it is daring or desperation, and again I think you are on the right track.

A German-Jewish friend told us some time ago that Henry Kissinger was the subject of a long piece in Der Spiegel which depicted him as an admirer of Bismarck and Count Metternich, in other words a schemer who fancies himself in that role and as an advisor and chief counsel to a ruler. This is implicit in American accounts of him, although not openly stated. In addition, he studiously ignores the Asian experts whom he used to know at Harvard, men like Fairbank and Reischauer who know more than Kissinger will ever imagine about the Chinese mind.

In other words, Kissinger is quite capable of conceiving this Chinese gambit in terms of glorifying Nixon and therefore himself, but it remains to be seen how capable he is when it comes to matching wits with the Chinese. If Kissinger is the smartalec he appears to be, he is in far over his depth.

Let me say something about the Chinese mind as I have experienced it. Allowing for all its hangups, it is the nearest thing to unfettered intellect I have heard of in our species, and certainly its best current representatives are Mao Tze-tung and Chou En-lai. Whether clowns like Nixon and Kissinger know it or not, they are up against the first team. The Russians, who are no slouches themselves when it comes to brains, are well aware of this and habitually avoid negotiating ~~in~~ with the Chinese except in dire circumstances because they know from nearly 500 years experience that the Chinese always are two or three steps ahead of them.

You mention to your friend Howard that the Chinese took the initiative. I'm not sure in what sense you mean that. I find no evidence to that effect but do find evidence they created a situation in which the Kissinger-Nixon team saw the bait and took it. But the Chinese made no overt move outside their own sphere. If they were hospitable to the pingpong players, don't they have a reputation for being perfect hosts ?

As you sense, if the Chinese laid a trap for Kissinger and Nixon sent him walking into it, it was Kissinger who did the walking and Nixon who sent him.

The question is the price Peking is ~~going~~ ^{going} to charge. Our suspicion is that the price Kissinger brought back from Peking would ~~shock~~ shock the daylights out of the military and the right if they knew it. But he also may have brought back ~~with~~ the realization -- too late -- that once you start this sort of thing it is not easy to back out, and that any reversal is going to make Peking look good and Washington look bad. Hence Nixon's nervousness, if it was that, when he made the announcement. In some way, too, the Chinese may have insisted on announcing it sooner than Nixon had planned to.

A vital question is why Peking bothers. They have no debts, the country is stable and unified as never before in history, the people approve of their government more than they disapprove, and they are doing relatively well.

In the aftermath of the pingpong visit I heard a friend talking from London who said Ed Snow and Wilfred Burchette were agreed, along with many others in Europe, that the Chinese are convinced Nixon MUST liquidate the adventure in Vietnam somehow and are determined to be in on any general settlement for Southeast Asia. This figures. Their history almost dictates it. In addition they are concerned about Japan and Russia, both in the nuclear sense, and new contacts with America could help in both situations.

Add to this their talent and tradition as traders, and the unquestionable fact that some time they must escape the image of partial isolation into which American policy has forced them since 1949 (which was not altogether a handicap at times from their domestic political standpoint). These are all good reasons. The question is whether they are good enough reasons to persuade the Chinese to deal with a man like Nixon. That judgment is up to them, and I'm sure their private answer is that he's just another hairy barbarian. They've been dealing with barbarians for centuries, outwitting them when circumstances were anything like equal and bending like the bamboo in the wind and absorbing them when they swept in overwhelmingly as conquerers. You win some, you lose some.

Of one thing you can be sure, besides the intelligence factor I discussed above. If there is one constant in the Chinese analysis of American political behavior it is the unshakable conviction that little ever happens in this country without domestic politics being at work if not operating as the determining factor. The truth is, the Chinese probably know better than Nixon himself what he needs for 1972 and how much he'll pay to get it. They know how much to ask and how far to press, and when. Far more than most Americans, they know well how Nixon must be the man they must deal with, simply because he has made a career of preventing anyone else from moving toward them. If Nixon seemed driven in his announcement, it is possible but not likely that the Chinese leaned on Kissinger in some way. That would not be typical at this stage. I suspect as more likely the possibility that Nixon was rushing out the news before Kissinger's security screen dissipated and the military got any bright ideas. ~~by~~ A fait accompli made any military action impolitic at this time. The generally favorable reaction to the idea of the visit suggests that if this was the Kissinger-Nixon judgment, they were right.

When we speak of the Chinese as isolated we fall for our own propaganda. The people, sure; the government leaders, no. If anyone is isolated, we are. At least 500 B.C. Sun Tze, the Chinese sage of war and politics (Hi there, von Clausewitz) codified the folklore of his time. Its central theme was an eight-word couplet usually translated something like this:

Know yourself, know your adversary;

In a hundred battles win a hundred victories.

Kissinger himself has remarked upon how well informed Chou En-lai showed himself. Too bad for us that the same can't be said with certainty about Henry.

The Chinese approach toward conflict and contention is still based upon Sun Tze, which is still part of the folklore, part of the psyche of every Chinese regardless of whether he has heard of Sun Tze or not. No Chinese ever consciously fails to leave himself a way out, nor one for his adversary, but the adversary has the responsibility of recognizing it and of not taking on the Chinese in the first place. A Chinese may speak the words of Marx, Engels, Kant, Hegel, Lenin and Stalin and, of course Mao, but he's still Chinese and using them for a Chinese purpose.

If anyone can make that claim, the Chinese is realism personified. We underestimate him at our risk, not his. We can overestimate him because of our ignorance, but not in terms of brains. His intelligence is the product of a very different and very old culture. When men like Owen Lattimore and John Fairbank try to tell us how it's different, and why, and what it means, we call them commies and tend to banish them. There is more money in war and the threat of war, real or manufactured.

Our glorious leader, whether prodded or persuaded by the upstart Kissinger or not, has decided this treasure trove of fear and hatred must at last be turned to his own advantage because 1972 is the last chance he will have to do so and it would be profligate to allow anyone else to ride this particular tiger. Whether he meant to or not, he's gone for broke. He's in grave danger, and so are we all.

Best from us both,



jdw

P.S. --It may mean nothing, but we note that Frey led the vice squad that put the arm on Judge Haggerty.

We feel sure we have nothing on the early use of RB47s, an idea which we find quite new. We'll bear it in mind.