

5/30/74

Dear Harold,

I'm writing this mostly off the top of my head--I'm at home right now, having gone through my WG files. Your last letter was very encouraging, and I hope you won't mind that I read excerpts of it to my friends to give them an insight into what wonderful people you and Lil are. You are correct in assuming that when I wrote you to tell you I was gay I did so on the assumption that it would not change your feelings toward me. Had I thought otherwise I would not think as highly of you and Lil as I do.

Here is a rough progress report on my Nixon work, with emphasis, really, on the problems I'm encountering.

I've read the transcripts, and made notes, but I will doubtlessly have to read them at least once more, after I have combed Nixon's public statements on the subject.

First, as it comes to mind, let me ask you this: This is to be "Quotations from Chairman Richard" Does that limit my mandate strictly to quotations from RMN? How about Ziegler and Warren press briefings, or legal arguments on President's behalf? After going over my files, I have found several instances, esp. in the legal arguments on the tapes, where such quotes would be good, such as in conjunction with RMN statements on how he's fully cooperating.

There are many difficulties with the transcripts within the framework of the book you outlined to me. For one, so many of the things said are clear only in the context of either the whole or a large chunk of the conversation, and lose their proper meaning when extracted. In many cases you could extract a quote to show that P, H, and E wanted to get the truth out, but in fact in the context of the whole conversation, they were discussing "scenarios" for a cover-up in which they would make it seem they were putting out the "truth". Still, there are many places where a single quote or a relatively small segment of conversation can be excised and have its true meaning preserved and apparent. However, in many of these cases, it will be necessary to make parenthetical insertions so that the quoted portion may be understood by itself. This is one of the reasons that it does not seem practical to me to lay out the book as you suggested--with facimile reproductions of the official transcripts, I think the best thing will be to retype them ~~XXXX~~ to allow for parenthetical insertions.

I've assembled a complete series of RMN's words on WG, from my files and also from what the White House sent me. I've yet to go through everything in this, but I have come up with some things, so let me give you a few examples and you can tell me if I'm on the right track:

Opening of Watergate speech, April 30, 1973:

"I want to talk to you tonight from my heart on a subject of deep concern to every American."

RMN to Dean, March 13, 1973:

"I noticed in the news summary Buchanan was viewing with alarm the grave crisis in the confidence of the Presidency, etc....How much of a crisis?... the point is, everything is a crisis. (Ex. del.) it is a terrible lousy thing--it will remain a crisis among the upper intellectual types, the soft heads, our own, too--Republicans--and the Democrats and the rest. Average people won't think it is much of a crisis ~~XXXX~~ unless it affects them.

* * * * *

RMN at press conference, August 29, 1972:

"We are doing everything we can to take this incident and to investigate it and not to cover it up....We have cooperated completely. We have indicated that we want all the facts brought out..."

Nixon and Dean, Sept. 15, 1972:

"D-Wright Patman's hearings...whether we will be successful in turning

that off or not I don't know. We have a plan ... (see 64-65 in Bantam for more details)....we ~~YMK~~ don't just want Stans up there in front of the cameras with Patman asking all these questions... (talks about getting Ford to talk to minority members of Patman committee.)

P--Jerry should talk to Widnall....

H--Damn it Jerry should....

P--The point is that they ought to raise hell about these hearings...

D--That is the last forum where we have the least problem right now. Kennedy has already said he may call hearings of the Administrative Practices sub-committee. As these committees spin out oracles we used to get busy on each one. I stopped doing that about two months ago. We just take ~~XX~~ one thing at a time.

P--Yiu really can't sit and worry about it all the time. The worst may happen but it may not. So you just button it up as well as you can and hope for the best, and remember basically the damn business is unfortunately trying to cut our losses.

* * * * *

Nixon to Rogers, April 17, 1973:

"So, I must say, I've done evrything I can to get to the bottom, Bill. I said, 'John (Dean), you got to let it all hang out--now find out--you got to tell me what the hell the score is so we'll know how to deal with this.'"

Nixon and Dean, March 13, 1973:

D--These questions are just not going to go away. Now the other thing that we talked about in the past, and I still have the same problem, is to have a "here it all is" approach. If we do that

P--And let it all hang out.

D--And let it all hang out, Let's with a Segretti, etc.

P--We have passed that point.

Nixon and Dean, March 22, 1973:

P--Do you think we want to go this route now? Let it hang out so to speak?

D--Well, it isn't really that--

H--It's a limited hang out.

D--It's a limited hang out. It's not an absolute hang out.

P--But some of the questions look big hanging out publicly or privately.

D--What it is doing, Mr. President, is getting you up above and away from it. That is the most important thing.

P--Oh, I know. I suggested that the other day and they all came down negative on it.

This is the general type of thing I'm looking for, as well as just good quotes from the tapes on individual topics, like "Hoover was my crony." One thing that I'm concerned about is that this be done fairly and honestly, and that quotes not be used out of context. If you wanted to, you could put together a really dishonestly edited book that would seem to destroy Nixon. The point is that he is destroyed by honest editing and faithful representation of what he said, or at least reading inn a meaning that is not warranted.

Have you heard that Rep. Gonzales (D--Texas) wants to get a new Cong. probe of assass? It was in this week's "Star", a scandal rag. /

Will probably write more later. Have to go to Gainseville next weekkfor few days. Hope to be ready to come down within two weeks.

Best,

Howard