

4 May 1973

Dear Harold:

In forwarding the enclosed I have tried to hold everything to sidebars and other items which you might not see in the Post or NY Times. Yesterday, May 3, for instance, the Chronicle had nothing that did not come from one of those two sources or which wasn't such obvious AP or UPI stuff that your local papers certainly would have carried.

Our locals here in the past week have broadened their coverage considerably, so there is less chance they do not carry the essentials of the main daily stories which you see in the WX Post. Therefore you might try reducing the amount of stuff from the Post which you forward, paying special attention to sidebars and special workups which the Chronicle or Examiner might pass up if they got through any of the wire services, including that of the Post itself. It usually turns out that the Post has very little that the NY Times does not come along with several days later, as far as the main developments are concerned. This should reduce your burden somewhat, I hope. We are in the same fix you are, trying madly to keep up and often pasting and filing without reading thoroughly.

From the Ex clippings we've been sending you will gather that Hearst and his minions are not being very gentle in their criticism, and this is a good sign. They say candidly, this is not enough.

We did not see the GL on TV but did tape and listen carefully to the radio version. He sounded extremely tense, stumbled much more than usual and paused just a little too long when he was reaching for soap opera dramatic effect, as at the end. The usual Nixon overkill. KPFA picked it up from a local network AM station, and had preceded it with a replay of the 2952 Checkers speech. They timed it so well that the announcer had time to say only that "as they said in 1952, a vote for Eisenhower was a vote for Richard M. Nixon. Here now is President Nixon speaking from the White House:" Unfortunately they hadn't announced they were going to do this, so we were unable to tape more than the last part of the ~~Chekers~~ speech. It was a most deadly parallel.

The newsphotos more than bear out your impressions of how he looked. Tired, drawn, extremely tense, excessive makeup. The photogs and their editors were not kind.

Your 17 through 3 are here, and I'll try to answer a few of your questions. No do NOT send back the Ampex tape. Not worth bothering with. We had a similar accident with another Ampex cassette. Fortunately we didn't buy many. I suspect their reels are a bit too loose.

Don't send The Agronsky panel program, or any other. No time to listen. We still haven't cracked the last two sets of tapes you sent earlier. I can't be sure from your notes whether you have one Agronsky program or two. In any case, don't hold them any longer on our account.

I'm glad to hear that you apparently agree with us that the main reason GL is going so easy on his two top aides is that they know more of what he's actually been up to than do the others, therefore have the greatest leverage with him. They have resigned, but still have their offices in the White House, a sure sign they can't be treated too harshly. Truly a bag of scorpions, with each carrying a stinger that means the end to any other who goes too far. I suspect you will agree with our suspicion, however, that the deadliest sting of all may still be intact in the armament of Nunt.

We think you are correct in your opinion that Dean was the one who mousetrapped Gray with the Hunt file. We feel the fact that Gray kept them several days before destroying them indicate that he didn't destroy them until ordered to do so. While Dean is the likeliest candidate for the one who gave the order, it also has to be kept in mind that this order could have come from Hunt himself, if only indirectly. It is typical of his complicated maneuvering, to seem to incriminate himself further in order to incriminate his employer. It may be questioned ~~how~~ how much further he actually incriminates himself. Not too much, I'd say. Meanwhile he opens a whole new can of worms that reflect on those ~~for~~ whom he was working and may be inviting them to consider how many other, bigger cans he can open if they go too far. We've never disagreed in the slightest with your judgment that Hunt is the important figure in this picture, and our conviction grows that the way this tangle works itself out depends more on him and what he does and says than on anyone else except the GL himself. The GL always has had a talent for jumping into bed with dubious characters, and this time he may have broken all records. Hunt's values are entirely his own, ~~resembling~~ resembling those of the GL little more than those of more normal people. He has made it clear he'll stop at nothing. Shall we hope he doesn't?

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The STM West has detected a coincidence that ~~my~~ interest you on another subject. A NY Times story by Crewdson on 26 April 73 notes ~~that~~ that ~~on~~ 19 April 73 CREEP transferred its records and documents to the National Archives. An earlier shipment had been made 5 Feb 73.

April 19 was the day Washington attorney Peter Wolf surfaced and told ~~Judge Sirkin~~ newsmen that a client of his who had worked for CREEP had removed eight cartons of documents from the White House 18 June 72, including material from Hunt's desk, the day BEFORE Hunt's office was searched by White House aides. Wolf said his client (whom he did not name to newsmen but later reportedly did name to a judge, in camera, presumably) kept the material through the summer, then returned it to CREEP. What this may mean, we don't know, but as we've all learned, dates can be important.

Re your request for an opinion on the business of JER's latest statements via Lesar, I'd scarcely dare to attempt one. In spite of your efforts to keep up informed all along, I remain extremely vague about this whole situation and am not even sure I could reconstruct a reliable picture even if I went back through the dozens of letters and memos on it, many of which I simply could not understand at the time and gave up trying to do so. It's too scattered, too fragmentary, and therefore any opinion I might form, even if I took a week off and tried to review it, would be subject to about 99 per cent potential error. I understand your wish for such an opinion, and agree it's all getting pretty close to the flame, and can only agree things could get very heavy in this quarter. I've copied the JER notes, and thanks.

We hope your trip to NY turned out well, and best to you both.



jdw