

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Post 10/26/73

Strongest Challenge

In firing Archibald Cox and forcing the resignation of the nation's two highest law officers, Richard Nixon has issued his strongest challenge to date to the Congress and the American people. He has told us that he is beyond the law and above any meaningful investigation. The sad reality is that this challenge will go unanswered. The small men we call a Congress will bluster—very cautiously—for a few days, but Nixon will not be impeached. And the people, lacking any semblance or moral leadership from their elected representatives, will soon return to worrying about more pressing matters such as the price of beef and the Monday night football game.

Already our "leaders" in Congress are making "courageous proposals" to set up a committee to look into the feasibility of setting up a committee to investigate blah, blah, blah. The more cautious among their ranks undoubtedly will await the outcome of the next Gallup poll before taking any definitive position. And the people, failing to hear a chorus of strong voices condemning this man Nixon as a stain on our republic, will soon report to Mr. Gallup that it all must be "mere politics."

Mediocrity of leadership in a time of crisis helped plunge this nation into the Civil War. Good men who did nothing permitted the rise to power of such evils as Joseph McCarthy. And we have the audacity to condemn other nations for tyrants? No, this latest affront is not the last straw which will spell the downfall of Richard Nixon. There are none among us, it appears, who have the strength and independence to meet the challenge.

Hey, senator, how about a select committee to consider . . .

JAMES P. DAVENPORT.

Chevy Chase.

Reason Enough

Mr. Nixon has found a way to avoid a "definitive Supreme Court decision"—a downfield block on the Special Prosecutor at the appeals court level! If we didn't have enough reason to impeach him already, we do now.

But the master of the *quid pro quo*, the mono-principled man who "knows everyone's price," has apparently found an unspoken arrangement with Congress. A little flattery in selecting his team from their crowd, a quiet threat of creating a scene with a messy impeachment, a promise of vague, future benefits protects this man who has created more problems

than he (or anyone else, I fear) can solve. That he may have FBI files to threaten some also occurs to the more cynical of us.

Surely we, the people, can protect the presidency from the deals made by politicians to accommodate each other. Surely the Constitution permits us, the people, to protect the presidency from an incompetent, honorless, opportunist. Must we threaten to "throw all the rascals out" before we find congressmen with the integrity of Messrs. Sirica, Cox, Richardson, and Ruckelshaus?

JOHN L. BERG.

Rockville.

Urges Delay

Neither the Congress nor the people could gather courage to impeach the President in time to halt illegal and horrendous war in Indo-China. Is this, then, the credible moment to do so—in the midst of the President's effort to halt war in the Middle East?

Peacenicks were the first to talk impeachment. Now, I submit they should be first to urge delay rather than allow themselves to be carried along by the well-known "bandwagon effect."

As citizens of this nation and the world, we cannot indulge in a process of prolonged domestic purging when, as now, peace depends in part upon a stable American government, committed to detente, under a President at last desperate to achieve at least one area of peace.

Moreover, our material support to one of the adversaries, Israel, makes us a party to the present conflict and morally liable for its termination. Basic minimum responsibility dictates peace first, and only then consideration of impeachment, as the proper order of the day.

WINIFRED GALLANT.

Washington.

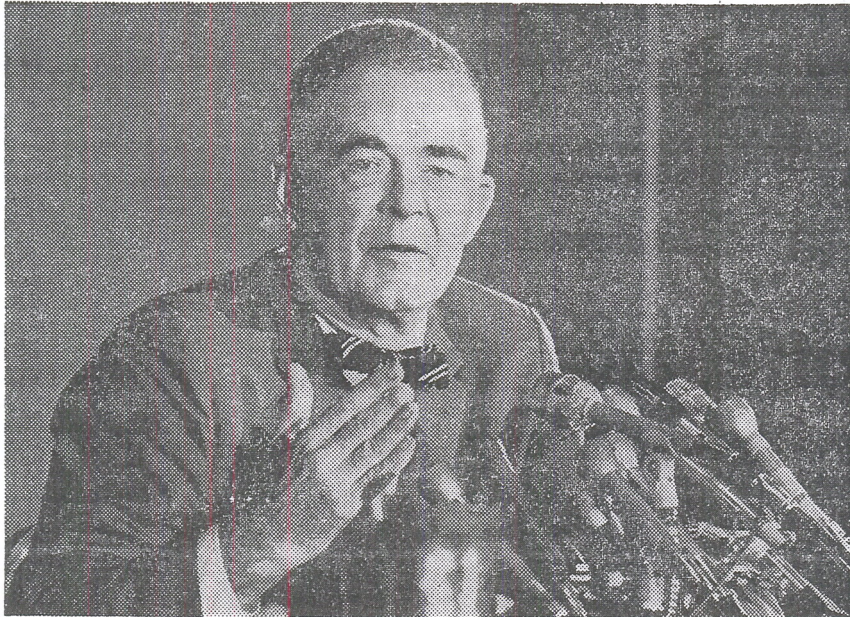
Above the Law?

Nixon's arrogant behavior in firing his "special prosecutor" provides the American people with the opportunity to correct his stated belief that they are children who must be told what to do. It is no longer sufficient to assume that our institutions will function safely by themselves — Nixon has provided evidence to the contrary. We must, at this point, demonstrate that no man is above the law, by informing our elected representatives that they must, without further delay, proceed to impeach this President.

EDWARD R. SHAPIRO, M.D.

Bethesda.

Reaction to the Firing of the Special Prosecutor



Rough Times

If Mr. Nixon would spend the same amount of energy working to solve the problems he was elected to deal with as he is spending evading the truth in the Watergate caper the country would be better off. It must be hard being a Republican these days.

BRIAN LEE.

Arlington.

Just Looking

If there really are UFO's manned by beings of superior intelligence observing the U.S. and the rest of the world there's a good chance we'll never see them again.

JIM RADKE.

Green Bay, Wis.

New Election

In view of the probably unpalatable alternatives for a successor to Richard Nixon should he be convicted after impeachment, the clear and present danger to ourselves and the world of an irascible Nixon enduring his ninth and greatest personal crisis while commander-in-chief of a super power during this nuclear age, and the proposition that America should not endure a caretaker government for three years, I suggest that the Congress, should it deem Mr. Nixon's removal from office appropriate, sponsor a constitutional amendment provid-

ing for a presidential election in November 1974 (and then in 1978 and every four years thereafter) in which Mr. Nixon could not of course, run. I believe that in these times replacement of Mr. Nixon by a newly elected President and the restoration of confidence in the executive branch should take precedence over exposure and punishment of Mr. Nixon.

STEVEN S. SULIK JR.

Silver Spring.

Confirmation

The President's surrender on the issue of tapes confirms what we all knew—the correctness of Mr. Cox's position. There is reason to believe the President used the tape dispute as an excuse to get rid of Mr. Cox. The situation must be restored by the re-appointment of the special prosecutor's office headed by Mr. Cox and by the return to office of Messrs. Richardson and Ruckelshaus. Until this is done, no presidential nomination to any office should be acted upon by the Senate. If the President fails to re-establish the Special Prosecutor's office, Congress has the power to do so by resolution overriding, if necessary, a presidential veto.

The recent episodes suggest the danger of giving the military a foothold in the White House. I refer to former Secretary of Defense Laird, former Vice Chief of Staff Haig and former General Counsel to Defense Department Buzhardt.

LEONARD B. BOUDIN.

New York.

Stennis, Anyone?

Back when everyone was playing "Stennis, Anyone?" my daughter, in a prescient moment, invented an important bill. Now its time has come. The Gude-Bayh-King Presidential Impeachment Bill.

VIRGINIA W. BEAUCHAMP.
Greenbelt.

Sheep From Goats

Well, you have to say this much for a Constitutional crisis. It certainly does separate the sheep from the goats and the honorable from the dishonorable.

LOIS SMALLWOOD.
Bethesda.

Laws or Men?

I am deeply concerned about the effect the President's action will have upon my future profession, since the American people cannot respect a legal system which is so blatantly disregarded by a President who has himself been a lawyer for 35 years.

The idea that our society is governed by laws, not by men, has been expounded by great legal scholars from John Marshall to Archibald Cox. It demands that the law reign supreme, even if a President of the United States must be removed from office as a result.

ANDREW Y. STANTON.
Arlington.

Read the Constitution

Doesn't anyone read the Constitution of the United States of America? Its words are the essence of clarity: "Article II, Section 4, Impeachment: The President . . . shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors."

However, notwithstanding these plain words, the top AFL-CIO leaders today (Oct. 22, 1973) demanded the resignation or impeachment of President Nixon for his refusal to produce the Watergate tapes and the firing of Special Watergate Prosecutor Archibald Cox."

President Nixon is not accused of treason or of bribery. Therefore, one must consider whether the firing of an employee, e.g., Archibald Cox, is a "high crime and misdemeanor." The answer is "Certainly not."

Archibald Cox was an employee.

Furthermore, it is ridiculous to believe that tapes, per se, will reveal the truth of anything whatsoever; the

recorded speakers may have been lying throughout their recorded statements.

President Nixon is not a God-image—nor, thank Heaven, is he a charisma-figure: He is a man of extraordinary political skills and a man of extraordinary devotion to the best interests of America. Those who believe the "best interest" of America are contrary to the beliefs of President Nixon naturally oppose him.

SUE CLEGG.
Washington.

Supports the President

I strongly support President Nixon's action in firing Cox. Apparently Mr. Nixon is going to display the same courage in cleaning up the Watergate circus as he did in bombing Hanoi and mining Haiphong. The only thing he did wrong was waiting so long. It should have been done within the hour, instead of late in the day.

DONALD H. COSTELLO
Lincoln, Calif.

Betrayed

Unbelievable! That is my reaction to the firing of Archibald Cox and Nixon's decimation of the top levels of the Justice Department. I feel that the American people have been betrayed.

No doubt, the President legally can remove any federal employee not protected by the several statutory merit systems. But that fact is an irrelevant technicality. Prosecutor Cox was not working for Richard Nixon—he was on a special assignment of the highest priority for the American people. His removal was a deliberate obstruction of justice by a President who has demanded that the courts handle Watergate and related scandals.

Apparently Mr. Nixon fails to comprehend what a terrifying crisis he has plunged us into. In order to conceal official malfeasance, he is willing to scuttle our precious constitutional system. The man sworn to uphold our Constitution has become its principal subverter.

For the nation's sake, we must stop this man while our institutions of government are still intact. America cannot allow one desperate man to trample under foot the oldest democracy on earth.

BIRT E. WAITE.
Knoxville, Tenn.

In a Word . . .

Impeach.

IRWIN WEISS.
College Park.