

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Post 11/6/73
Mr. Nixon's Advice

The case for a special, independent prosecutor to investigate Watergate was persuasively stated by President Nixon himself in his famous "Checkers" speech in 1952. Contending that Presidential candidate Adlai Stevenson could not be trusted to clean up the corruption growing out of the Truman administration, the then Senator Nixon stated:

Take the problem of corruption. You have read about the mess in Washington. Mr. Stevenson can't clean it up because he was picked by the man, Truman, under whose administration the mess was made.

You wouldn't trust the man who made the mess to clean it up. That is Truman. And, by the same token you can't trust the man who was picked by the man who made the mess to clean it up, and that is Stevenson. And so I say, Eisenhower, who owes nothing to Truman, nothing to the big-city bosses—he is the man who can clean up the mess in Washington

Likewise, neither President Nixon nor any presidential appointee can be trusted to clean up the Watergate "mess" that his own administration has made.

MELANIE FEIN.

Washington

MacArthur and Cox

Some commentators and columnists have compared two presidential firings, those of Archibald Cox by Richard Nixon and of General Douglas MacArthur by Harry Truman.

Actually, the two have little in common when judged on situation, circumstance and cause.

Mr. Cox was fired on October 20, 1973, for stubbornly carrying out an assignment which had been agreed upon by the Executive Branch and the Congress.

General MacArthur was fired on April 11, 1951, for grossly overstepping the line which in this country constitutionally separates the functions and duties of the military leadership vis-a-vis the civilian-political. He persisted in his public advocacy of "unleashing" Chiang Kai-shek from Formosa to invade the Chinese mainland, a policy not vaguely supported by either the White House or the State Department (nor by the Joint Chiefs of Staff for that matter); and when informed by

those Joint Chiefs of an impending peace move which President Truman was preparing to initiate through normal diplomatic channels, MacArthur astoundingly preempted the President with his own peace announcement. He was, he told the world, prepared to confer with the Red Chinese commander in Korea for immediate surrender negotiations. The text of his terms were set forth in thousands of leaflets dropped over the Chinese military positions and MacArthur flew to Korea to be ready in case his proposal was accepted. (It wasn't).

It would be difficult to say which was the most startled—Washington or the rest of the observing world. Truman acted promptly to relieve his presumptive general and bring him home.

MacArthur was fired for violating a principle, Cox for carrying one out.

CLARKE NEWLON.

Washington.

In Football Lingo...

Somehow or other, neither the news media nor the people are able to get through to the President. He simply does not seem to understand what he and his administration have done, and is doing, to this country. Recently I was looking at page 143 of the Redskin's program where all of the football penalties are enumerated. Knowing of the President's primary interest in the sport it suddenly occurred to me that perhaps we might get through in football language.

Clipping: The fund raising activities of former Secretary of Commerce Maurice Stans.

Ineligible Receiver Downfield: Former Attorney General Mitchell's alleged acceptance of the Liddy Watergate plan.

Roughing the Kicker: President Nixon's firing of former Special Prosecutor Archibald Cox.

Illegal Procedure: The Ehrlichman sanctioned burglary of a psychiatrist's office.

Offside: The Watergate break-in.

Holding: Keeping Dita Beard in the hospital.

Illegal Use of Hands on Defense: All of the potential perjury indictments growing out of the conflicting testimony of Haldeman, Dean, Ehrlichman, Magruder, Colson, Mitchell and company.

Unsportsmanlike Conduct: The activities of the plumbers, particularly their actions in unfairly discrediting opposition candidates.

Further Comment on the Crisis of the



Interference With Fair Catch: The Watergate cover up.

Personal Foul: The White House "Enemies List".

Delay of Game: The President takes time out to bench Cox and Richardson for failure to follow his signals, then uses their play to carry the ball himself on a quarterback sneak.

If you print this at all it would be very nice if you would put it on the sports page so that it will have a chance of being called to the President's attention.

LAWRENCE N. BLOOMBERG.
Washington.

Lack of Courtesy

At the press conference held recently by the President I was shocked not only by the virulence of the questions put to the President, but also by the lack of courtesy in the manner in which some of them were asked.

I hope that at the next such press conference the media representatives will show more respect to the President and the office of the presidency.

F. HARDEE ALLEN.
Silver Spring.

Honking Tickets

Do you think that if the signs carried in front of the White House had said, "Honk if you support the President," the police would have stopped the motorists who honked and given them tickets?

ANN ROSS.
Arlington.

Critical Advice

In his column "Nixon and Laird: Breaking Off," of October 27, 1973, Clayton Fritchey ended an article excellent for its perspective and evaluation of the President and his adviser with a thumpingly cynical statement that, like Nixon, nearly all Presidents really wish to hear only "yes-man" advice.

I doubt that Mr. Fritchey is correct. But even if he is, the important mitigation he left out is that most Presidents, if painfully, have maintained White House channels of critical advice and vigorous appraisal of their actions. If past Presidents, for the most part, have not wanted to hear unpleasant feedback, they have acted on the conviction that it is too important to ignore.

BRUCE JAQUES JR.
Washington.

Mr. Clean?

There are two aspects to the events of Saturday (Oct. 20) that could leave the Mr. Clean image of Elliot Richardson at least slightly clouded.

The most telling point made by Mr. Cox in his televised press conference was his reference to the promises made to the Senate by Mr. Richardson. In particular Mr. Cox read from the record the promise that there would be no interference with the independence of his activities. A big question is left unanswered; that is, to what extent did Mr. Nixon endorse

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this promise made by Mr. Richardson? Did Mr. Nixon request or suggest that the promise be made? It is difficult to imagine as important a statement as the promise of independence being made without prior endorsement by the President. At any rate, Mr. Richardson is in a position to state what happened—or will he now become part of a cover-up and be the fall man for another broken promise made by Mr. Nixon to the public?

In another, but possibly related area, Mr. Richardson's letter of resignation contains no suggestion of improper action by Mr. Nixon. Why not? Mr. Richardson has been "done in" by Mr. Nixon. Why does not the letter of resignation contain some element of retribution or disappointment in the action by the President? Why is it so understanding of the action of the President?

Having been a believer, I now have concern as to how clean Mr. Richardson is. Hopefully, he will soon clarify some more details of his understandings with Mr. Nixon in this area, and also reveal more background on his resignation.

DAVID L. COHN.

Potomac.

Ford Is Qualified

It was with dismay that I read your recent editorial, "The Choice of Mr. Ford."

If by "pedestrian" you mean someone who believes in the middle-class values of our society; by "partisan," someone who rejects the notion that President Nixon is Satan; by "dogged," someone who believes it is more important to save tax dollars than to save bureaucratic reputations; if a lack of embrace for the New Deal, Great Society programs means that one has not shown an "impressive grasp of the complexities of hard questions"; if by "modest ambition" one means a man content to work for his constituents, his country, and his party, as a U.S. congressman; then I suppose Congressman Gerald Ford might be all of these things. But with leadership and dedication, vigor and confidence, Jerry Ford has served his country and his party loyally and unpretentiously for the last 25 years.

I believe Mr. Ford to be the ideal man for saving the country from a protracted bitter fight in Congress. Congressman Ford meets the criteria set by President Nixon — i.e., he is qualified to be President; he shares

the President's views on domestic and foreign policy; and he is capable of working with both parties in Congress. I think Jerry Ford will make an outstanding Vice President

DAVID C. TREEN,
Member of Congress (R-La.)

Washington.

The current vacancy in the office of the Vice President leaves the Congress in a singularly flexible position with respect to filling the office of the President after impeachment and conviction of the incumbent. The Congress can let the office be filled by the current Speaker of the House or a Speaker specifically elected to that post for the purpose of succession.

In the latter case particularly, the Congress could attach conditions to the election of the Speaker that would be morally if not legally binding on him as President. The new President could be required to call a special election for the selection of his vice presidential nominee under the 25th Amendment, in whose favor, if confirmed, he would resign. The result, fully within the Constitution, would be an interim President elected in a presidential election specifically called for that purpose.

ROSS M. STARR.

Assistant Professor of Economics,
Yale University, currently visiting
the London School of Economics.

London.

Special National Referendum

Nixon refuses to resign. Congress seems unable to act. Ultimate sovereignty rests with the people. Let the people act.

Parliamentary democracies hold new elections when their governments fall. With sufficient will, we too could have a special election under our system. It could work this way:

1. Speaker Carl Albert could announce that, should he become President, he would nominate the winner of a special national referendum as Vice President; and that he would resign as President upon confirmation of the Vice Presidential nominee.

2. Mr. Ford could withdraw his nomination and, if he so chose, he could compete in the special election.

3. Congress could then act to remove the President with no conflicts of interest or partisan advantages involved.

4. I believe our fifty governors and secretaries of state could and would arrange such a special unofficial referendum given the present extraordinary circumstances.

JUANITA H. BLACK.

Silver Spring.