

WX Post 24 April 73  
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

*The Real Truth, Please*

It now appears that the White House has been slanting news bulletins and possibly omitting information in press releases regarding sabotage and espionage conducted against the Democrats prior to the presidential election last year.

Yet, I thought we had so often been advised by Vice President Agnew that the news media is the guilty party of this foul crime of distortion of the truth and that only the scriptures of the White House press releases were worthy of notice.

But, if the media is not perfect in its gathering and analysis of the news, compare their performance with the "versatility" of the White House and the Republican Party with what was the Truth yesterday and what is the Real Truth today.

As late as April 14, the Republican National Chairman described the Watergate affair as a Mickey Mouse operation. Now, three days later, and 10 months after the attempted bugging of Democratic National Headquarters, the deception has been switched off and the White House now prepares to switch on the Real Truth.

RUSSELL D. BATSON.

Washington.

*'Not a Stitch On'*

"But he hasn't got any clothes on at all," said the little boy. And he was right. The Emperor didn't have a stitch on. Even the loyalest of his subjects couldn't see any clothes on him tho' they'd had to pretend that they did because that was the test of loyalty.

And today in a moral sense the President of the United States stands naked as a jay bird before the American people.

Is it really credible that Mr. Nixon's attorney general and campaign manager, his White House chief of staff, his official White House counsel, his personal attorney and many other top people in his administration knew about and participated in the Republican Department of Dirty Tricks' operations and that Mr. Nixon had no knowledge of these operations? The answer in one word: "Nein!"

I am not referring merely to the Watergate felony. This was only one episode among hundreds in the same pattern—to spy, sabotage, disrupt, divide and conquer—the most publicized but not even perhaps the most important. Forged documents, vile smears of Democratic leaders, false phone calls, impersonations, infiltrations, fabrication of scandals have taken place on a nationwide basis with scores of paid Republican agents, provocateurs, spies and saboteurs participating.

And these vicious operations were financed by GOP campaign funds illegally diverted from their proper use by

secret and corrupt methods such as the "Mexican laundry" device—perhaps as much as a million dollars all told.

Nothing remotely resembling this in scope and leadership and utter contempt for the democratic process has ever occurred in American political history. It was a deliberate and malevolent effort directed by the White House and the President's closest political advisors to poison and subvert the wells which nourish the political process by which our country has survived for almost two centuries and become—with all its aching faults—the strongest and freest of all the major nations on Planet Earth.

I am a former assistant to President Truman, a former FTC Commissioner and Acting Chairman, and a former legal counsel to the U.S. Secret Service. But I am a present and future American citizen.

STEPHEN J. SPINGARN.

Washington.

*Well Done*

My thanks to The Washington Post, and a "well done" award to reporters Bernstein and Woodward for their work on Watergate.

In spite of White House denials for months, unfolding events prove their accuracy as reporters.

Corruption in political campaigns already uncovered creates doubt in my mind as to the value of both major parties.

HARRY R. MENGES.

Alexandria.

*Not Likely to Forget*

So President Nixon finally has discovered that there is a Watergate scandal, though the stench has been obvious to most people here for a good long time. How convenient it is to cite "major developments" as a reason for changing his mind and allowing presidential aides to testify under oath on Capitol Hill. Is this absurd rationale supposed to obscure the fact that the major developments in the case took place almost a year ago—namely, the Watergate break-in itself, the spying activities, the campaign money shenanigans? The only new development is that more of the criminal activities are being found out, no thanks to the administration.

And how convenient for the administration to label as "inoperative" all previous White House statements about the case. Alas, it's not quite that simple. We have not yet reached the point where history can be withdrawn from circulation, Orwellian-style. The public is not likely soon to forget the many months of administration operative statements, cover-ups, decits, and obstructions of investigations.

RICE ODELL.

Washington.

# Watergate . . . Comments on the

## *Digging for the Why*

While you are digging, digging-into "Watergate" to find out WHO was involved, why don't you also, find out WHY?

A good place to start, I think, would be the 1960 presidential election when (from what I have read) many precincts (especially in Chicago and Texas) showed more votes than live registered voters.

SALLIE ALWARD.

Baileys Crossroads.

## *Serious Questions*

It will be interesting to see just what these "new major findings" President Nixon says he has uncovered in the Watergate case are. My guess is that there will be little really new that hasn't already been reported by Jack Anderson, The Washington Post, CBS and other enterprising members of the news media. Thus we can see why Nixon and Co. fear and would like to regulate these vital sources of information.

Whether or not Nixon actually had knowledge of the Watergate conspiracy prior to its exposure, and whether or not he knew some of his most trusted aides were involved prior to the testimony of James McCord and others may, in the end, have to be something the average citizen has to accept or reject on faith alone.

Whatever the outcome, this whole episode raises many serious questions, not the least of which is this: If Nixon uses as an alibi in this case that he has been deceived by some of his closest and most trusted advisors, then isn't it

just as possible that he has also been deceived by some of his aides and confidants in other areas, such as those who feed him information on the continuing war in Southeast Asia, on the state of the economy etc.?

The "forthright" manner with which Nixon finally took the Watergate situation by the horns, when he finally seemed to be left with no alternative, does little to inspire trust or confidence in the minds of thinking citizens, and what is worse, it increases the growing cynical attitude of the public toward politics and politicians.

BRUCE W. NUSBAUM.

San Francisco.

## *The Facts*

Each new development in the Watergate case brings us closer to the basic question:

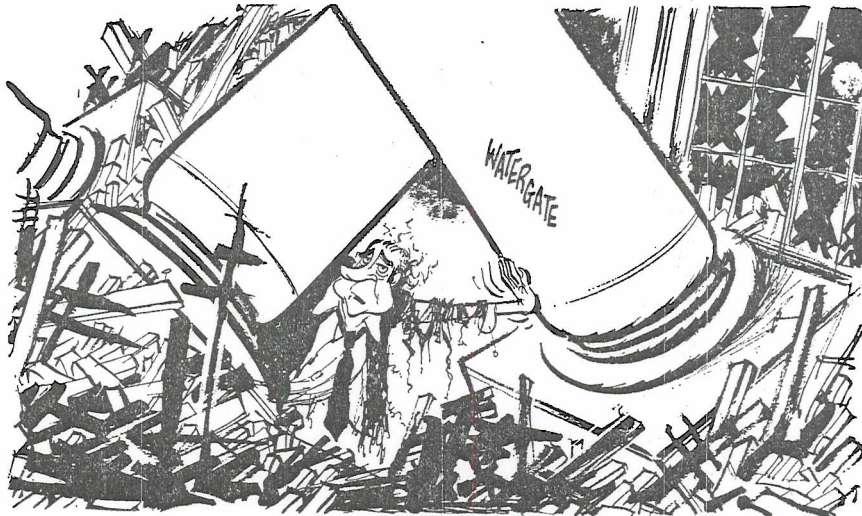
Was Nixon involved in the political espionage? If our electoral system is to survive as a viable entity, this question MUST be answered definitively.

The facts must be established so clearly and completely, that if Nixon is innocent, Herblock will believe it, and if he is guilty, Alsop will believe it. Anything less will leave a cloud over America that could destroy us.

The nature of the facts themselves mean far less than the nature and extent of their disclosure. What is needed, and what the electorate must demand, is the truth, nothing but the truth, and the whole truth. Every name, every date, every transaction, everything. Nothing less.

ROBERT GELMAN.

Silver Spring.



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“... It Has Come To My Attention ...”

# Investigation and its Implications

## A Salute

This is simply to salute Messrs. Woodward and Bernstein at a time when their collective fannies must surely be dragging after 10 months of dogged persistence in the marathon pursuit of that holiest of grails, Truth. Somewhere out there the spirit of A. J. Leibling must be smiling down on them. Watergate would have been an important story in any decade, but I rather suspect that an equally great story would be how they put it together, kept themselves from coming unglued in the process, and cranked out such consistently superb copy against merciless, unyielding deadlines. If these excellent reporters are unable to get around to a book soon, then I nominate Gay Talese as next best qualified.

I'm sure they had help, so I express my grateful appreciation to all who had a hand in the realization of this distinguished public service. On this side of the river, incidentally, one local paper's dubious contribution to the public's "right to know" has been a venomous editorial, livid at the White House for not brazening out the original lie to the bitter end.

PAUL VANTURE.

Alexandria.

## Thoughts on Watergate

Stewart Alsop's column on the President and his aides "supererogatory impulses" in the Watergate spying (Post, April 6) is at best a charitable partial truth that is monumental in its omissions. At worst it is a piece of psychologizing that is almost sinister in its patronizing oversimplification—patronizing in its sympathy for all that misguided power in the White House, and supremely condescending, and more than a little insulting to the moral sensibilities of a hapless public. To reduce the Watergate matter to political overeagerness would be a little like discussing Buchenwald or Bergen-Belsen in terms of German efficiency and supererogatory thoroughness.

Watergate and the other efforts that have been only hinted at so far to infiltrate and subvert the majority opposition party and other political groups (what was the "Internal Security" division at Justice and why was it shut down suddenly that week, anybody, quick, before the paper shredders move in?) are *not* the same as jumping off-sides in a Whittier College football game—Knut Rockne-isms must be contagious in Washington.

Mr. Alsop's egregious non-interest in the issue of corrupt use of executive power is positively unnerving. Does a veteran observer such as he believe that readers are so stupefied by now that the issue does not even deserve a

dishonorable mention? The President himself has raised the issue of political subversion, and what a freaky *deja vu* it was to hear him volunteer a reference to the Hiss case in connection with Watergate!

"A pattern seems to be emerging here," as some supererogatory gumshoe working on the staff of Representative Nixon's investigation of Chambers-Hiss might have said: If men are willing to subvert the instruments of political power in the country, what are they willing to buy and sell in negotiations, also "over-eagerly" kept out of the public record, with ITT's, Vescos, and wheat dealers? After all, Mr. chairman, there's a point of order here. What will the next nominee to the FBI directorship have to promise the White House, and will the secret protocols between the parties be found in a pumpkin in a patch at Camp David?

Almost incidentally, the question whether the President did or didn't know about Watergate is just silly. Would Eisenhower have been thought to have done a smaller disservice to the nation's welfare if he had claimed not to have known about the U-2 spy flights than for knowingly approving them? Truman, bless his memory, used to say that the buck stopped with him.

SEYMOUR RUBENFELD.

Washington.

## No Wonderland, This

The Nixon administration's insidious involvement in the Watergate affair has reached such phantasmagoric dimensions that it brings to mind this passage from Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (A Mad Tea Party):

"Then you should say what you mean," the March Hare went on.

"I do," Alice hastily replied; "at least—at least I mean what I say—that's the same thing, you know."

"Not the same thing a bit!" said the Hatter. "Why, you might just as well say that 'I see what I eat' is the same thing as 'I eat what I see!'"

"You might just as well say," added the March Hare, "that 'I like what I get' is the same thing as 'I get what I like!'"

"You might just as well say," added the Dormouse, who seemed to be talking in his sleep, "that 'I breathe when I sleep' is the same thing as 'I sleep when I breathe!'"

To this I add only that I hope the sleepy American public, like the Dormouse, will awaken and see the serious ramifications of the involvement of top-level elected officials in a seedy matter like Watergate.

DON BARNES.

Washington.