

Nixon vs. Bill of Rights

To the Editor:

The President's recently released statement which justified the use of spying, burglary, infiltration and sabotage on the grounds of national security was most unfortunate. The Constitution does not provide for any contingencies under which the Bill of Rights can be abrogated. Being "inalienable" rights, and rights which are written into the nation's fundamental law, they should by definition be above all attempts at circumvention for whatever reason.

While it is clear that it is necessary to strike a balance between the ideals of civil liberty and the necessities of civil order, it seems obvious that the President and his advisers have tipped the balance toward the latter. And when civil liberties vanish, nothing remains to differentiate us from the corrupt tyrannies of the rest of the world but crass and cynical national self-interest.

It is tragic that self-styled eighteenth-century liberals like Tom Huston should choose to associate themselves with the drawing up of plans which would have been repugnant to even the most conservative eighteenth-century Republican. Even John Adams, who was condemned for his implementation of the Alien and Sedition Acts, was firm in his understanding of the difference between law and caprice. And the infamous acts he supported were, unlike many of the actions suggested by Mr. Huston, laws passed by Congress after open debate—not secret schemes.

If Congress—and the Republican leadership in particular—have so little regard for the Constitution and the liberties embodied in it that they are willing to allow the justification of official lawlessness to be based on national security grounds, then we might as well throw in the towel and resign ourselves to the failure of the American experiment. For a failure by Congress to respond fully and indignantly to Mr. Nixon's revelations will be a far worse treason than anything that

Pitch of Hysteria

To the Editor:

It is the fervent hope of every thinking citizen that the truth will be revealed and the wrongdoers punished through the present investigations of the Watergate affair.

However, the preoccupation of the communications media, worthy though the original intentions were, is now reaching a pitch of hysteria in reporting barely related and unsubstantiated evidence of wrongdoing (some of which would be ludicrous if the end result were not so tragic) which hints of a saturnalia. Is there possibly a parallel in the McCarthy era?

Will history report that we spoke with dignity and restraint in this crisis?

Are those who seek to find guilt with such vindictive delight willing to pay the price of the utter chaos to which they too are contributing?

We all bear a piece of responsibility that justice be done to all.

ELEONORA R. SCHAUFFLER
New York, May 26, 1973

The Luck of the English

To the Editor:

Oh to be in England, now that profumotime's there! Two milords, maybe a duke, harlots and whips, all signifying that middle-aged boys will be boys and that these two were, to quote The Times of London, "astonishingly silly." The Englishman, his home his castle, can relax in front of the telly and enjoy the uproar. No strange clicks on his telephone line.

Our scandal, by contrast, is no fun at all. No orgies. No closet pederasts. Not even a blonde in a secret apartment or a Swiss bank account. No one on the sauce or visiting a shrink. Nope. Just a bunch of clean-living, arrogant manipulators, wrapped in the flag and off on a power trip. Not at all amusing. Too scary.

CATHERINE MOYNAHAN POSSES
Amityville, L.I., May 27, 1973