

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

*The Tape Erasures, Ford's*

The findings about the cause of the 18½ minute gap on Nixon's tape add a new dimension to the whole case. No one of any legal stature will maintain that the deliberate destruction of evidence is not an impeachable offense.

Although it would now appear that the House has no choice but to initiate impeachment proceedings, I would suggest one last attempt at an alternative. This would be an invitation by the House, in the form of a resolution, to Nixon to testify; such testimony to be given publicly, under oath, and under thorough, extensive, and exhaustive cross-examination. Failure of Nixon to agree to this would call for impeachment proceedings to be carried through, so that the Senate could conduct a formal trial. Such a procedure should remove the onus for starting a process as drastic as impeachment from Congress to Nixon. Should he accept, it would lead to exoneration or resignation. Should he refuse, it would be tantamount to requesting impeachment.

Certainly, for Congress to do nothing at this time would be a slap in the face to the American people. I can think of no more important issue on which to judge a congressman's qualifications for reelection.

ROBERT GELMAN.

Silver Spring.

The evidence presented by experts regarding the erasure of pertinent segments in the White House tapes is one more link in a chain of events which echoes all too clearly George Orwell's warnings against totalitarianism in his post World War II satire, "Animal Farm." In that "fairy tale," pigs had set up a utopian community which preached the equality of all animals. Slowly, each idealistic tenet upon which that society was based disintegrated into a power ploy for the omnipotent pigs until the doctrine, "all animals are created equal" contained the addendum, "but some are more equal than others."

There is a frightening parallel between Orwell's biting political analysis and the nightmarish tactics of the Nixon administration. With each revelation by the press, with each demand made by the American public, we receive the same self-serving answers and tactics. Tapes have been erased,

White House statements have become inoperative, and a special prosecutor has been fired.

Our resiliency is incredible. How much more can we tolerate before acknowledging Orwell's characterization of manipulated underlings as our own?

MARILYN F. KRESSEL.

Alexandria.

Why don't you get off the President's back? If all the people accusing the President were half as honest and decent as he is, the country would be in far better shape.

Since when have the Democrats been so lily-white? Clean up both parties, if possible, but let President Nixon do the job he was overwhelmingly elected to do.

MRS. FRANK CIRKSENA.

Lincoln, Neb.

Now that another bomb has been dropped—this one by the experts on tape erasures as well as tape recordings—the Olympics Committee should meet soon and set up another competitive category: Champion Boomerang Thrower.

The Winner: Richard Nixon, of course

K. G. ROGERS.

Washington.

A nationwide organization is asking American citizens to "forgive" President Nixon for religious reasons. Of course Christian doctrine tells us to love and forgive. But this plea misses the central point of what democracy is all about. Democracy requires integrity and responsibility in government. The President has not yet been tried or impeached. In legal terms there is not yet anything to forgive. But we should not distort the philosophy of forgiveness into an unwillingness to make our legal and governmental system work as it should. If there is dishonesty or malfeasance in government, we have a duty as citizens to work for its correction.

It is certainly an abuse of religion to call it into play for selective political reasons in this way. If we are going to abandon our system of law and justice,

# Restitution for Cambodians . . . Rac

## Defense and Impeachment

let us start by "forgiving" some poor man who is in jail for committing a petty larceny because he and his family were in genuine need. Let us not start with a public official who is suspected of committing massive wrongs against the entire community, and who has not yet even been impeached or tried.

If President Nixon is convicted through impeachment or a court trial, then let us be forgiving toward him just as we should forgive any other human being. But let us not abuse our legal and constitutional system by refusing to understand what governmental responsibility is all about.

DR. BERNARD LAMMERS,  
Associate Professor of Government,  
St. Lawrence University.

Canton, N.Y.

Enough is enough! Now we have Spiro Agnew the Second blaming Nixon's impeachment problems on a "few extreme partisans" who want to dominate the Congress and, through it, the nation."

Should these activists win, our new Nixon mouthpiece warned, "with the super-welfare staters in control . . . we can expect an avalanche of fresh government intervention in our economy, massive government spending, higher taxes and a more rampant inflation."

The problem with Gerald Ford's anti-impeachment strategy is that it's been tried before. While Agnew was having his groceries paid for by one of his supporters, his house refurbished by the taxpayers (\$39,500 brick and redwood fence, \$12,000 driveway, \$4,367 for air conditioning, \$503 for carpeting and \$200 for a new basement fan and ceiling light) he was feeding us the same line that Ford has now picked up.

But it ain't gonna work! You can fool them some of the time, but not all of the time? Right?

What this country needs is a quiet assembly of some five million "extremists" who would like to see this country back on the right track gather in Washington some afternoon, and whisper in a clear, distinctive tone at about three in the afternoon one word . . . OUT! Maybe some of the bums who

are running away (or trying to) with this government would get the message.

NORMAN J. JACQUES,  
Antioch School of Law.

Washington.

I have heard Watergate and impeachment until I am sick all over.

Can't you find a good word to say about our President in your paper and on the air? He has done a lot of good for the country and could do much more, if he had something good said about him through the news media. So why not try saying a few nice things and speaking a few kind words? Then ask our Good Lord above to give him and all guidance and strength? Maybe we will see things get better.

No need to beat a man to death. That is what the heathens do. Have you turned heathen?

JANIE S. GREGORY.

Chase City, Va.

Why should Mr. Agnew reap a profit from the improvements on his home paid for by the government? Regardless of the original purpose of these improvements, any increase in the selling price due to them should be turned back to the taxpayers. It should not be difficult for a real estate appraiser to say what proportion of the home's increased value comes from our tax dollars.

AILEEN MORRIS.

Laurel.

I support President Nixon and believe in his ability to govern.

VIRGINIA NEPTUNE.

Parkersburg, W. Va.

In view of Nixon's several references last month to serving as long as his health permits, is enough press attention being given to his option under Section 3 of the 25th Amendment?

It reads to me that he can put himself on paid sick leave for the rest of his term, relinquishing his duties but keeping his pay and "perks." How say you?

NORMAN W. GAMBLING.

Sacramento, Calif.