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Dear Js,

Can you imagine late October, two days after being 20⁶ nights, warm enough for me to have coiled the soft hoses for winter storage? I'd planned to do more grass mowing, which alas I can't go after as long as once I could. Just as I'd cleaned up what I felt had to be done not to be forgotten, SHE decided, having seen a Bachelor's Button in bloom, that the outside is for her. As indeed it is. I expect two calls, which means the phone should be tended, so I have time to tell you what to me is a fascinating story from an unimpeachable source, that Nixon has been going to pieces once outside the White House! Mark Childs today to the contrary notwithstanding (and he is by-and-large right by Farley's law, Truman being an exception and in some parts weather a controlling factor).

Ian McDonald covered Nixon on Long Island yesterday and his COB Fred Emory (Ian was too young when Louis Heren went back to the Times of London for partial retirement as American Editor) Friday's Philadelphia appearance. Both report the same thing.

Now I'd been quite interested in this a.m.'s CBS TV treatment of the super-elaborate preparations for Nixon on Long Island, filmed beginning before the event. During it CBS showed footage of the speech, with demonstrators demonstrating and being ejected, through it all Our Nobel Leader speaking with calm self-containment. Only it turns out that this was skilled and dishonest editing.

At Philadelphia, as soon as the protest began, Nixon rushed to the end of his speech and brought it to a fast close and scrambled. Almost panic. LII. more so. He came close to going to pieces. They have the advance texts, as you know. Nixon stuttered, skipped through it badly, seeming to lose himself in that, too.

He was a Rockefeller guest and got balled up on where he was. Remember, he has been a New Yorker. He got his counties mixed, his names twisted, and finally was so embarrassed he at one point asked while speaking, "Am I in Nassau?"

Ian feels he has to be kept in the W.H. more than plans call for and that his people have to be concerned about this. He thinks Nixon is slipping, that he ~~is~~ is showing the lack of experience with hecklers. I feel otherwise, that the constant protest against him and his own awareness of the consummate crookedness are getting to him, though he, be the president with least conscience and scruple of modern times at least, that he can't face himself rather than not being able to face dirty kids, as his pols call them. It also seems that the protesters in most if not all places have been more numerous than indicated by the media, that "Govern and anti-Nixon signs at the least are everywhere he goes.

In Long Island the whole thing was so bad that most of the audience was gone or restive before his speeded-up end. Now when you consider that the audience was carefully selected from his most dedicated, you get a reading. The CBS show presented the people who were particular about the amount of and quality of the light on him in advance, those who had gotten something like 40,000 noise-makers flags and other attractions. The flags were not small, but 12 x 18. Then there were Nixon straw hats, the whole bit, elaborate, expensive and programmed as the Duke of Mantua didn't get around to for Rigolotto's daughter Gilda. The extent and detail of the planning are fantastic. And with all of this he can't take it. Those he serves and who need him so much have spared nothing, but he is having trouble taking the pace when there is no pace and what he has is contrived and close to controlled.

Ian is an honest and a good reporter. He would not say anything like this without it being more true than he says. His COB would be even more cautious.

Meanwhile, their Sunday affiliate has a man here doing a roundup on the WG. He is formerl: NYTimes, Phil Jackson. I expect to hear from him, too. And I'll see what is printed, in the event he gets what has not appeared here. When the pillar of the British press establishment when it is in financial trouble sends a special reporter here for a WG story this close to election, the recent disclosures must have had some impact there.

SHE, meanwhile, is planting some grape hyacinths and snowball balbs now.

HW