

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: More Comment on T

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## Ad Men in Government

If advertising agencies throughout the United States were to find the will and a way of putting their men in major managerial positions in their clients' industries, wouldn't the result for American industry be what we are seeing in government today?

Much more serious than "Watergate," it seems to me, is that many of the same players have been in charge of government itself. As a result since Nixon's second inauguration we have seen the placement of "loyal" Nixonites in controlling positions in agencies all over Washington, the use of public information officers to "sell" the President's program, tricks to defeat the intent of Congress and efforts to control public television.

I, for one, have been deeply disturbed by the thought that while one dollar of my taxes could be designated for the Democrats, thousands of my dollars are being used without my permission to advance the Nixon program rather than to support public service government.

Nixon's dilemma in deciding how to handle the Watergate affair must have been deepened by the fact that the personnel involved were so closely tied to his second term game plan that we have seen unfolding.

The President has an opportunity to change all this and start restoring the management of government to public servants rather than ad men. His decisions about White House staff will be of great significance in this respect.

FRANCES L. VAN SCHAICK.  
Washington.

## "Will of the People"

The recent links established between the Watergate affair and the Ellsberg trial have raised some disturbing questions in my mind. Can the common denominator in these incidents really lie with Mr. Nixon's staff? If the most obvious motives and ultimate gains are considered, surely Mr. Nixon himself must come under scrutiny. But from whom does Mr. Nixon derive his power? Certainly the "will of the people" last November would indicate a large portion comes from them. But if rival candidates can be sabotaged, opinion polls falsified, bogus telegrams sent, etc., the "will of the people" is obviously subject to severe limitations. To some extent the "will of the people" has been bought with secret campaign funds, large donations from special interest groups, and it has been to the providers of these resources that Mr. Nixon owes some debt of gratitude.

I suggest that political espionage,

limitations on dissent, and prosecution of antagonists of those that hold political power not only keeps the present administration in office but also works to the interest of those that put it there.

An ugly specter is raised: Where is the least common denominator of motive and ultimate gain in the prosecution of the Chicago seven, Berrigan brothers, William Garrison, Otto Kerner. Finally, I am haunted once again by Mr. Chief Justice Earl Warren's assertion that the facts of President Kennedy's assassination will not be revealed in our lifetime.

ROBERT CARROLL, M.D.  
Alexandria.

## And From the Home Front

For the duration of the Watergate, could The Post put out His-and-Hers copies of the first news section?

This would certainly contribute to domestic tranquility at my house.

PAUL DUNCAN.  
Washington.

## Watergate, the President and the Presidency

uncover the lies and expose the truths to the public. If it hadn't been for the zeal of the press, the story of the Watergate might still be untold.

ELLEN L. SINGAL.  
Washington.

## 11-Month Indecision

Now that the President has acted, belatedly, to put his house in order, it is difficult to avoid making comparisons between the way he handled the "Watergate affair" and the criticism heaped on Sen. George McGovern for the "indecision" he displayed during another celebrated "affair" involving Sen. Thomas Eagleton.

It should not escape notice that President Nixon's "indecision" extended over an 11-month period during which all that stood between the truth and an orchestrated cover-up was a handful of determined investigative reporters. At least Sen. McGovern's indecision was not based on half-truths and misstatements relayed to him by his closest advisors.

MICHAEL PETIT.  
Washington.

## Needs Help

To help me understand President Nixon, could you please diagram and explain the play he suggested to Redskins Coach Allen? Thank you.

JOSEPH ACCARDO.

Arlington.

## "Dismal Disappointment"

President Nixon's speech last evening was a dismal disappointment. The issue of the Watergate was skirted in the President's maudlin effort to remind America that his presidency has been one of good will, equal opportunity, and "peace with honor."

The "Watergate affair" is a sorrowful and significant episode in the history of American politics; its ramifications are deep. The political machine, if this "affair" is to tell us anything, needs vast reorganization. No more secret funds; no more deliberate attempts to perpetrate frauds; no more deceit to the American voters.

If there is to be a good thing derived from this mess, it is the persistence and the commitment of the media to

## Trust in the Presidency

In accepting President Nixon's statement of self-exculpation from misdeeds in connection with the Watergate episode of political espionage, while at the same time retaining serious reservations about the truth of the contention that he escaped any form of involvement, those of us who grant the sincerity of the President's declarations, and feel that he should proceed with the business of his office unimpeded by preoccupation with a messy political scandal, may be accused of excusing the man simply because he occupies a venerated office. In part, that is true.

But it is not so much that we should blink at the man's excesses because he is President. Rather, it is that when we see a President who is driven to the final political precipice — perhaps indeed by his own acts of deliberation or mere negligence — then we cannot be entirely sure that if he passes over into disaster, the viability of the constitutional office or the stability of the nation will not go with him.

So it is not that the man who is President is above the law. He is not.

It is rather that in this circumstance a countervailing national need intercedes. The presumption of a President's integrity is indispensable to the rationality and efficacy of a system of political order at the pinnacle of which he sits. That presumption can be properly embattled by the allegations of a partisan opposition, and it must be canceled by incontrovertible evidence of "high crimes and misdemeanors," the dimensions of which should be conspicuously venal and not disputably malfeasant. But if it is battered by protracted rumor of uncertain misconduct, the possible and gradual evaporation of popular confidence in the man may transfer to the institution he represents and its authority, and that is not worth indulging our righteousness in assailing the foibles of the person in whom the office has been invested.

The President has asked us, in effect, that he be permitted to continue. He has said he has great things yet to do. He wants to be above the Watergate fracas, because he implies that an effective presidency might not weather prolonged exposure to its implications. He may be right about that, and the extent to which he may be right is the extent to which we should restore our trust in him.

JACK DuVALL

Washington.

### *"Smokescreen"*

The Chief Executive's smokescreen on Watergate was absurd . . . a deluge of meaningless rhetoric. By design or not, it certainly succeeded in perpetuating the mark of his administration. Mr. Nixon had two alternatives . . . either a clean breast of it if he was implicated, or a stout slap at those who were. He chose neither, preferring to smother the yet hot ashes in a cloud of unctious and often irrelevant babbling. I'm not convinced he's clean. The stench has reached a level where he'll have to communicate on a more direct and personal level. And, if he's not talking, what is the grander scheme in this nefarious plot?

THOMAS E. NIEMANN

Arlington.

### *Appalled*

Having just heard the President on television, I am appalled at his insistence on insulting the intelligence of the American public. Mr. Nixon left so many questions unanswered that he must have assumed that he was addressing an uninformed, unsophisticated, America-love-it-or-leave-it audience. Were we listening to Checkers all over again?

MARIA ELENA DUBOURT

Washington.

## “For All its Ugliness, Watergate Is Neither Ephemeral nor Unfortunate”

When President Truman was being pilloried for a minor indiscretion by his military adviser, one of the last of the Senate's grand orators, Matthew Neely, defended the President by noting that when he, Neely, had been governor of West Virginia he had often been attacked similarly. He said that with so many appointments to make, it was simply inevitable some would be bad. After all, he noted, “even Our Lord, picking thirteen to aid Him, picked one who strayed.”

Unlike Truman, Eisenhower and Johnson, who had one or two around them who committed an indiscretion (or more, in Bobby Baker's case) for at worst tiny personal advantage and at best overdone friendliness, Nixon has reversed the record—the question is becoming whether any of his personal assistants, except Kissinger, is honest or law-abiding. And their improper acts have been aimed at destruction of the most important of our democratic processes, and at the integrity of our judicial process. All but literally, they are Reichstag-burners.

Justice Holmes, commenting with reservations on the emerging FDR, said how significant it was that he had the ability to surround himself with first-rate people. The issue on Nixon and Watergate is not how soon he was aware of that idiotic effort, but how much his judgment and character are

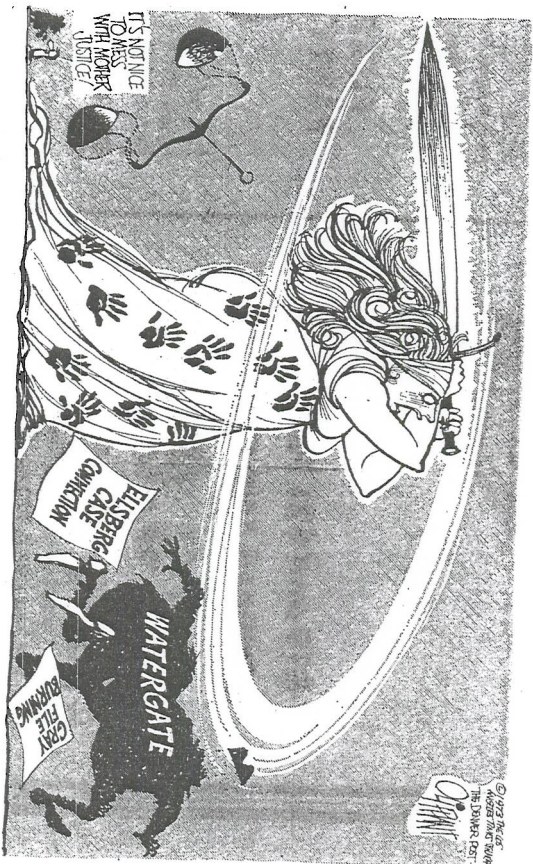
revealed by the human and political quality of his closest associates.

Watergate's impact is of historic significance. For those of us dedicated to democratic process, that significance is importantly affirmative.

First, corrupt campaigning is shown to be so risky that it's probably too

Second, it is unforgettably clearer

than before that the long-standing flow of power into a White House nest of appointees, selected without Senate confirmation, who hold themselves beyond congressional inquiry, is an intolerable mockery of several of the most fundamental — and wise — constitutional provisions for “checks and bal-



Third, campaign financing will obviously now be improved.

Some say Watergate is an awful event because it decreases respect for the presidency. But that office by its nature commands respect, and for the rest, respect depends on who is president and what he does. Americans worry too much about respect for authority, and too little about respect for the processes that underlie our authority's legitimacy. Some say we should be compassionate toward the Reichstag-burners: that is sound counsel but comes with no grace or perspective from any member of this administration. (Shall we follow the President's recommendation to extend the death sentence, and apply it to campaign corrupters?)

In short, for all its ugliness, Watergate is neither ephemeral nor unfortunate. And the credit goes to a few individuals and the tradition of independence of judges and the press.

ROY A. SCHOTLAND,  
Washington.