

DEC 30 1972

12/29/72

Dear Js,

Often I have said that Nixon is a Softspeak, Newthink madman and especially in recent weeks I have said the drive to authoritarianism is overt. In further ref to your 12/25, I ask an old hand a political question, with the background of almost total administration detachments from the House and Senate races and at a time when they had the biggest campaign pot in history and least (propovthimate to need) requirement for aloofness and stinginess.

What does it do to a Republican candidate in 1972 for the Republican administration to withdraw emergency help from farmers who have been smitten by many disasters and are in need; and then to withdraw rural electrification help, all within a couple of days? This could be interpreted as evidence that it doesn't expect an election, in 1974 or 1976, or anticipates ignoring them, or anticipates a change in the structure of society that will eliminate them. If I am wrong in thinking that in both cases what is involved is collectable loans, I am not wrong in believing that in terms of the overall budget these are small sums. Especially when with the winding down of the VB war and better relations with the USSR and China it still proposes an increase, and a major increase, in the military budget.

That kind of trimming could be interpreted as saving every penny for war. Inflated military production with a reduction in international tensions and in the size of the Army can be a forecast of expected war or war intent.

It is anything but natural or normal politics, and it strikes at the heart of traditionally Republican support. Not just the farmers but the entire farming areas, the economies of which these have effect.

Then I heard on the TV news tonight that we've told Sweden to keep her new ambassador. That is plain insane. Just because they criticized us? When did we not criticize everyone?

What surprises me may be wrong when I get the full details, but this seems to have been an immediate State return cable. I don't think, especially at a time like this, with all the things supposedly on him and the speech for her tag to prepare, that the name or fact of a new mabassador would require the President's personal attention. It also does not sound like the pros at State, either. Nor Henry K.

I've sent you all the Post has carried. My impression is that adverse reaction, here and abroad, has been much downplayed. Not only from your letter by earlier, from radio and TV reports. Open editorializing, so labelled, has been strongly adverse, continuing that way, tonight with both Brinkley and Severeid.

The Post has been running large editions. It has missed one of the more obvious ways to treat this kind of news: print the straight transcripts of Friedheim's conferences. They are incredible, from the rather generous excerpts on TV almost nightly. Really extreme. Tonight it even questioned the name of the destroyed hospital and suggested that all the damage is from downed planes: theirs and ours. Both newscasts opened with refugee Indian diplomats and their families, I think in Thailand, and with rather strong stuff. Next I guess the Italian and was it Netherlands? ambassadors will be given their walking papers because those governments registered official disapproval.

Maybe he'll depose the pope, in the US at least, and put Billy Graham in?

I'm not so sure Henry went to the ball game to stay in the limelight. Nor am I that he and GL need each other today. I think HK would like to be out and I'll not be surprised if, before the Harvard deadline, he returns. He can't do anything but go down now and I think he is troubled enough about his past. He is now a hero. I don't think he is dumb.

Tell Taylor: Lil used to know him well, having worked in the Senate with him. I met him a couple of times only, knew his wife, who helped our committee in NYC office, slightly. He made strong (this is confidential) objection to the swastika on the Bantam cover of his latest book. Wonder if he would today?

If HK goes, Nixon could have another (pun)Haighthead....I've not read Terrill. He was excellent on TV Cina time. And an regularly. (Thanks from Lil for the Australian stamp. She doesn't save or swap. They are for nieces and nephews.)...This a.m.'s news reported that Australian longshoremen are boycotting all US shipping. I suspect that the full depth of reaction will not be recorded and what is will not be completely reported here....His theory on Harriman's friendship with USSR interesting. Slightly, if only relatively, true. Or, maybe they know what I know and will have in TIGER. He had a special mission that is relevant and anti-Chinese. Can you guess?