

9 July 1972

Dear Harold:

This is a brief acknowledgment of your notes ranging from 29 June through July 3. Not much time, as the weekend, the only time I can get up to date on such things, is slipping away. For the past month we've had Saturdays and Sundays off, a terrible handicap since so many stores are closed, which forces us to get up early on weekdays to do necessary shopping and other chores.

Two things you discuss which find us in full agreement. First, the size of the bugging equipment captured at the Watergate. Your idea that more power is required because of steel skeleton in the building sounds entirely sound.

Second, your belief that the kids, the minorities et al will not sit still if McGovern is frozen out by the coalition against him. Agree fully. He is the only Democrat in sight who can conceivably beat Nixon and if he is not nominated the Democrats don't have a chance. Even if he is nominated it will be very tough to beat Nixon because of the advantages he has as President.

Tonight we heard Ron Dellums had bolted the black caucus or something to endorse McGovern, but Shirley Chisholm was still in there urging her delegates to stick with her on the first ballot, which could help Humphrey greatly in view of the apparent prevailing view that if McGovern doesn't get it on the first ballot he's done for. However, the party parliamentarian did rule today that McG's 120 delegates from California can vote on whether ~~to~~ a procedural matter Monday night, which supposedly gives McG enough to swing that vote, and if so, he may be in.

This will all be ancient history by the time you get this, but however it turns out, if McG is shouldered aside it means the party wheels and their backers have misread the signs and that Nixon will be elected by default because so many Democrats simply will not vote to Humphrey and/or Wallace.

What then? We concur that much trouble lies ahead, but have difficulty visualizing how it may come about. The main possibility I can see is that the Vietnam veterans and other young men in the military, both GIs and young officers, may turn out to be more influential than imagined and that any viable trouble pretty much would have to start there because no one else in a mood of revolt is armed or has access to guns or knows how to use them. It's doubtful if Army morale ever has been lower. The Navy and Air Force you don't hear much about, but Navy sailors have raised hell with every carrier that has sailed from the west coast recently and their antiwar leaders claim all crews are becoming disgusted with the war. Nothing mutinous, of course, but the yeast is working. It's hard to tell about the Air Force too, but there have been small but persistent demonstrations at Travis AFB for several months, and others in Massachusetts and elsewhere. The Air Force appears to have a relatively high percentage of blacks in its ground crews, and the one or two I've heard speak are very clear in their mind that the Vietnam war is just more of the same thing they've been enduring for 300 years.

If McGovern's almost religiously ignored popular appeal is brushed aside and Humphrey is nominated, I feel the disillusionment that will build up during the rest of the campaign and Nixon's re-election will make 1968 look like a lovefeast, that the reaction will be even more profound this time, and that even if Nixon serves up some kind of a peace settlement it will be clear to many people that he could have done so at any time during ~~the~~ his administration and that he was saving it for his campaign, just as he saved the China question for 25 years. There may be no serious outward disturbance at either convention at Miami Beach, but if the deals made there sow disillusionment, and bigger whirlwind than ever will be reaped. It may not come immediately, but when it does, look out. If the youthful element in the military begins to tie things up, if open defiance spreads, look out. This will be the signal for the military establishment to infiltrate or activate that already accomplished, with abortive uprisings and mutinies that can be easily put down and the lid clamped on the entire nation.

Don't worry about Chinese and Russian pressure on North Vietnam. It's there, of course, but neither leader of the socialist camp can afford to acquire the reputation of selling out, not against such a god-given enemy as the United States. They cannot openly advise Hanoi to knuckle under, not when Hanoi knows it has Nixon by the balls just now and already has seriously upset his campaign timetable. What the offensive didn't do in that regard, Gen.

Lavelle and his backers did, and you may be sure he is merely a front man, representing a policy that has many backers.

As for China, press reports ^{make it clear} /their railways/ ^{repair} crews already are going back into North Vietnam, just as Schurmann predicted. China probably will not go farther except for material aid until and unless we begin chasing Vietnamese Migs back to Chinese air fields and bombing there. That will do it. Whether China will invoke the Sino-Russian pact is doubtful because they don't trust the Russians. ~~and~~ If they invoke it, Russia will have no choice but to make a show of complying, at least.

As you may have noted, we had hijackings on two successive days last week. One unfortunate passenger was on both flights. The latter one, the one that landed at Oakland airport and where the hijacker was talked into surrendering without a fight, kept the entire night shift, including me, up until 5:30 a.m.

As you may recall, the earlier one involved a couple of Bulgarian immigrants who had smuggled themselves out of Bulgaria. Their demand to be taken to Siberia was of course a red herring. What they had done was to research an abandoned air force strip in remote British Columbia. Were going to drop a couple of dummies by parachute somewhere short of there, then be met by an accomplice and vanish into the wilderness with \$450,000. The FBI shot first and caught a lot of flak because of the passenger ~~they~~ killed, who happened to be a very respectable Canadian, and the two others ~~they~~ wounded, all by the second gunman hijacker. The next night with the boy at Oakland the FBI guaranteed him he would not be harmed if he surrendered.

Change of policy ?

No one noticed that the two Bulgarians, having been unable or unwilling to fit into a socialist society, rewarded the capitalist society which gave them haven by availing themselves of the currently most profitable aspect of free enterprise -- hijacking a plane.

Best,

jdw