

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR: *More Reader Comment*

A Constitutional Amendment for Removing the President

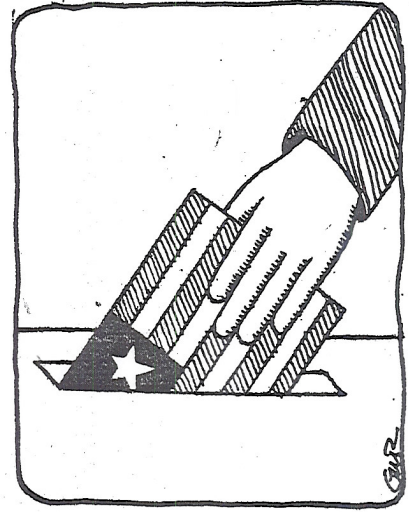
It seems that in 1973 a great majority of the people became dissatisfied with the President who was elected by an overwhelming majority in 1972. On the other hand, the polls indicate a lack of desire by the majority to have the country go through the trauma of the impeachment process. All of this leads me to the conclusion that what is needed is an amendment to the Constitution to permit the removal of the President by recall, a process that many state constitutions provide for their elected officials. This would give the people who elected the opportunity to change their minds after observation of performance on the job without waiting two or three years for another election.

I know that amending the Constitution often takes several years so this solution isn't satisfactory to those who

wish to punish the President for his alleged delinquency or that of his administration. However, it seems more important to me to learn to live with the present problem for just three more years and concentrate on a long range solution. If an elected official no longer has the confidence of the people who elected him, there should be a method of removal other than the long and costly procedure of proving him guilty of "high crimes and misdemeanors." I am sure that determining the best method of accomplishing this objective would take a lot of study and dialogue, but it seems to me that in the interest of a more democratic society the goal would be worthwhile.

Is anything being done in this regard?
JACK H. FOSTER.

Arlington.



By David Gunderson

'Isn't It Time We Stopped Kidding Ourselves?'

I am a member of the unmasked, unheard majority in the United States. Though I have lived more than half a century my opinion has never been polled, though it is often "quoted." I am tired of being the puppet supposedly mouthing words the ventriloquist media presumes to come from me. I do not believe what they are saying so loudly and so often. It is time for my kind, and I believe there is a majority of us, to speak up.

I believe in America and all the good and great potential that name evokes. Are we about to pull the self-destruct handle on our constitutional government because it has grown so big and so involved through our own rendering that it is no longer governable?

Are we about to impeach Richard Nixon for his sin of being so immersed in governing our country and trying to adjust it and its needs to a continually changing and explosive world community that he was unaware of some of the actions of his unwise subordinates? Or are we nailing him to the cross expecting thereby to wash away our own sins which have created a temporarily untenable world filled with false prophets eager to rush in to replace him?

In our current frustration over shortages, ecology, and prices, are we thrusting all the blame on one man, forgetting that *we* are the ones who demand a TV in every room, a bathroom on every floor, and a car for every member of the family over 16? Shortages of fuels and metals have been inexorably approaching us for fifteen years—long before Richard Nixon became President. While we have been out carrying placards demanding longer coffee breaks and higher wages for fewer hours our foreign neighbors have been classing us out of the marketplace. We have permitted the word "rights" to loom larger than right—our right and duty to assume responsibility for many of our personal problems which it seems easier, cheaper, and more convenient to allow the government to assume.

Isn't it time we stopped kidding ourselves that the government is someone else, and looked in the mirror and recognized that *that* face is America staring back? *That* face is the government—not somebody else. That more slices from that pie in the sky can come only out of the pockets into which these two hands are thrust? That

the burdens of America rest not on the back of a mythical, distant Uncle Sam, but upon our own?

Shouldn't we face up to a few other facts? That the Watergate mess is now so political that it will be impossible ever to explore or judge it fairly? That it is time to learn its lesson, pass the laws necessary so it can never recur, and forget it?

Or was the entire purpose of the investigation only to "get" the President?

Whom do you believe?

What do you believe?

What is the source of most of our information? If our source has not invented the credibility gap, has it widened it? Who says we are in disgrace abroad? Who puts that word out on America? What is the purpose of self-demeaning the greatest nation on earth?

Who gains when by loud half-truths our nation is torn to shreds? Who wins when our former President was hounded out of office? When the media presumes to elect and reject, who gains?

Let's get back on the track. Let's face the real problems surrounding us.

ELIZABETH GULLANDER.

Washington.

on the Crisis of the Presidency

Silence on the Tape.

If Richard Nixon were really innocent one would expect that the manual erasures of the Watergate tape would find him exasperated, desperately searching for the culprit of the crime. Instead, he says nothing, and prepares his own defense in the matter. Can anyone still believe him innocent now?

WARREN GREENBERG.

Kensington.

End the Paralysis

Those who, like Joseph Alsop, (January 23rd), conjure up the spectre of a government paralyzed by an impeachment trial seem oblivious to the fact that (flurries of White House PR activities to the contrary notwithstanding) the government has been effectively paralyzed by Watergate for almost a year as it is. Impeachment is the only way to end that paralysis.

The choice is clear: Either we tolerate a governmental "time out" to devote the required time and attention to resolving the massive abuse of power and trust that seems to have occurred; or we serve notice to future presidents that the apparently low moral standards of Richard Nixon's government are all they will be held to by future generations of Americans.

JOSEPH A. CONDO.

McLean.

Getting Results

Congress should give top priority to passing a law giving President Nixon a tax deduction of \$1,000 for every tape he turns over to the Senate Watergate Committee. That should bring quick results!

HERBERT A. FIERST.

Washington.

The President's Library

In view of the unsuccessful efforts of the committee organized to find a site for the Nixon library, may I suggest a simple solution: the San Clemente home proffered to the nation by its incumbent. Acceptance of this for the purpose of the library will avoid the need for yet another fund-raising campaign with all its implications. Although such action will help perpetuate an idea which I personally have always considered unnecessary since all

government papers should reside in the National Archives, I realize that our benevolent Congress has deemed otherwise.

ALEXANDER B. TOTH.

Washington.

Exorcism

As a citizen (and taxpayer) I wish to express my belief that Mr. Nixon's defenses, such as they are, against clear implications of criminal activities by him are not entitled to free air time on the television networks as a legitimate public function and part of the presidential office—even when tacked on to addresses on subjects meriting such treatment.

If the new Nixon theory of the tape erasures is that they (like other Watergate evidence) are of demonic origin, I suggest that an exorcism is required for which appropriate personnel may be found locally. The subject in need of the exorcism now appears to have been clearly identified—and also is found locally (on occasion).

ARTHUR D. BERNSTEIN.

Washington.

'They All Do It'

Our elected representatives when caught heretofore in illegal misdeeds naturally ran to a lawyer to defend them with all the trickery lawyers are capable of. I now fear for the legal profession if President Nixon somehow manages to survive the next three years. If he does, the politicians will naturally assume the American public has a high tolerance for chicanery and, therefore, when they get caught lying, evading taxes, extorting, accepting illegal campaign funds, eavesdropping, destroying evidence, obstructing justice, hiring scoundrels, wasting public funds, and generally losing the public's confidence, they won't need a lawyer to offer the defense, "Why pick on me, they all do it." And they'll be right.

JACK S. NANCE JR.

Springfield, Va.

'Political Motivation'?

A number of administration supporters have recently proclaimed within your pages that calls for impeachment are for the most part emanating from politically-motivated Democrats/liberals who are out to get the President.

A close examination of the facts should prove the inanity of such suggestions.

Were Democrats seeking political advantage, the last thing they would want would be the impeachment of Richard Nixon. Should such impeachment result in conviction or Nixon's resignation, Gerald Ford, unbesmirched by any stigma of Watergate, would become President, and would have an incumbent's advantages in the presidential election of 1976. Far better politically for the Democrats that a weakened and blackened President lead his party to defeat in 1974 and 1976.

I shudder to think what eight additional years of Republican economic and social policy would do to this nation. But I worry even more about the irreparable damage that could be inflicted on American democratic process were we to permit high crimes in high office.

ROBERT MOLLEN.

Washington.

Cast the First Stone

Let those who hold federal or state offices, Republicans, Democrats, politicians, members of the Watergate Committee, members of the Judiciary Committee, who are without sin among them, cast the first stone at Richard M. Nixon, our President of these United States of America.

HAZEL D. WALTERS.

Syracuse, N.Y.

Stalwart Jury Service

On a recent news broadcast I learned that the Watergate Grand Jury has been sitting for 18 months. Two of the jury have lost their jobs. No doubt many others figure that it is only a matter of time before they lose theirs. There is only one solution. Put the entire jury under Civil Service, make them all GS-14s, and award them certificates of merit for their stalwart service. They are going to be sitting a very long time to come yet.

GARY E. PITTENGER.

Rockville.