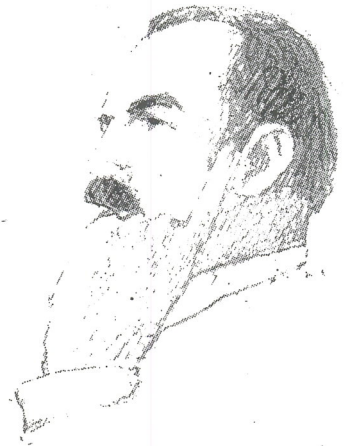


HEROES AND FOOLS

The Watergate players, their delusions and dilemmas, as perceived by themselves

Gordon Liddy: A Patriot Speaks



Until now, Gordon Liddy has been the only Watergate figure to maintain complete public silence. In the following letter to his wife, Frances, Liddy finally ends that silence. The full text appears verbatim.

July 31, 1974

Dear Fran:

THIS IS THE LETTER I promised to send to you containing my thoughts on some problems particular to this time in America: patriotism, duty, loyalty, and guidance for the raising of our children. The letter is for publication in *Harper's Magazine*, in return for money paid to you to assist you in supporting yourself and the children. Most of what I say here has been discussed in the family over the years, and in previous letters and prison visits during the past year and a half.

It will not surprise you that I have described the background of this letter. It may, however, prompt an objection from the editor of *Harper's* urging you to approve deletion of this introduction in favor of the fiction of spontaneity. Resist his importuning, as it will be but another manifestation of one of the basic infirmities afflicting our nation today; and that is as good a place as any to begin this essay.

It is impossible to function successfully as a human being without the ability to apprehend, and the willingness to accept, reality. It requires no more than average intellect and power of observation, added to the experience acquired necessarily by surviving adolescence, to see the world and mankind and understand them as they are. Nor does it demand more than Everyman's allotment of ability to reason to be able to distinguish between things as they are and things as they ought to be.

So fundamental are these precepts that it prompts impatience to read them. Yet in America today there is a marked reluctance to accept reality by those who remain able to perceive it, and a widespread indulgence in illu-

sion; the indiscriminate commingling in the national mind of Man as he is and as one might wish him to be, if not outright mistake of fact as between the two.

The evidence is everywhere. Reluctance to accept reality is best exemplified by the passion for euphemism. One who collects garbage is not a garbage collector, he is a "sanitation engineer" in the employ of a "Department of Environmental Services." An automobile that has been used is not a used car, it is a "pre-owned vehicle." Women do not kill their unborn children, they are congratulated upon being "no longer pregnant." Even the poor are deprived of the dignity of an honest statement of their condition only to have their plight described, in a contradiction in terms, as "underprivileged."

A classic example of fostering inability to distinguish between reality—things as they are or were (always objective)—and things as they "ought" or as one might wish them to be or have been (always subjective) can be found in one of our prominent national shrines. The location alone shows how deeply into the body politic the virus has invaded.

On the stone interior of the Jefferson Memorial in the nation's capital, there to be read solemnly by the thousands of citizens who travel to Washington to steep themselves in their historical heritage, is carved the following:

God who gave us life gave us liberty. Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed a conviction that these liberties are the gift of God? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that His justice cannot sleep forever. Commerce between master and slave is despotism. Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that these people are to be free. Establish the law for educating the common people. This it is the business of the state to effect and on a general plan.

There is only one problem: that which is graven in the Jefferson Memorial is not what Thomas Jefferson said. It

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is a deliberate alteration. To learn what Jefferson really said one must journey to the Library of Congress, there to consult *Jefferson's Works: II*, "Notes on Virginia, Query" (E 302 J 469). At page 225 our third President said:

There must doubtless be an unhappy influence on the manners of our people produced by the existence of slavery among us. The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submission on the other.

At page 227 Jefferson remarks:

And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God? That they are not to be violated but with His wrath? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever; that considering numbers, nature and a natural means only, a revolution of the wheel of fortune, an exchange of situation is among possible events; that it may become probable by supernatural interference!

Note that there are wholesale deletions in the Memorial version; that the order of the remarks has been reversed; that two different thoughts have been run together out of context, and the meaning has been distorted. If the scholarly Jefferson was employing the device attributed to "remarkable lawgivers" by Machiavelli,* as one might infer reasonably from his actual language, one would never suspect it from the corrupted version to be found in the Jefferson Memorial.

WHAT WAS DONE IN THAT MONUMENT to a revered founder of our nation is doubtless justified by those responsible as in the interest of furthering what is "right." It is what Jefferson ought to have said to express what he *should* have thought and *would* have said were he alive today.

Now there is nothing novel in the rewriting of history, as witness the Soviet encyclopedia or the *Washington Post*. The point is that the United States, a nation composed of human beings, is equally as susceptible as the rest of the world to the infirmities of human nature as well as the beneficiary of its strengths. Chauvinistic refusal to accept the former while celebrating the latter is a contributing factor to the success of those among us who foster as a virtue the denial of reality.

The United States of America is a nation-state whose formal existence was occasioned by a world war precipitated by the economic rivalry at the time between England and France. The consequent economic drain upon England prompted enforcement of the mercantile-system laws upon her colonies in North America. Those colonies, used to relatively little interference from the mother country, hav-

* "In truth, there never was any remarkable lawgiver amongst any people who did not resort to divine authority, as otherwise his laws would not have been accepted by the people; for there are many good laws, the importance of which is known to the sagacious lawgiver, but the reasons for which are not sufficiently evident to enable him to persuade others to submit to them; and therefore do wise men, for the purpose of removing this difficulty, resort to divine authority." Niccolo Machiavelli, *Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius*, trans. Detmold, Modern Library ed. (New York: Random House, 1940), p. 147.

ing grown sufficiently strong and being well situated geographically to do so, united against England and won their independence by force of arms.

The new country was populated by a vigorous people led by an educated elite. Her citizenry was armed and her fighting skills kept keen by conflict with an indigenous native population against whom it exerted inexorable pressure. That pressure was generated by economic growth and territorial expansion fostered by a work ethic and sense of national destiny.

All of this was located on a huge continent, among the richest in the world in natural resources, and protected on both flanks by thousands of miles of open ocean. The material success of the nation was assured.

The new country was organized under a written constitution created by the intellectual and economic elite, who were possessed of great self-confidence and desired to establish a government sufficient to enable individuals to enjoy "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" with a minimum of governmental interference. To that end the Framers adopted the social-contract theory of Locke and the system of checks and balances employed by Lycurgus, whose constitution had led to 800 years of stable government in Sparta. Democracy was rejected in favor of a republic with a limited franchise. The Constitution was quickly found to be in need of amendment. The method of doing so provided by the Framers, however, proved unable to accommodate the pressures generated by rapid national growth. This difficulty was overcome by the expedient of usurpation of that function by an unelected elite (the Supreme Court), to which *fait accompli* the people acquiesced.

This constitutional system failed once and was reimposed by force of arms (the Civil War). It came close to failing again as in very recent times the right of assembly peacefully to seek redress of grievances was corrupted into violence, and freedom of expression into license. The latter, combined with mass-communication technology, had the synergistic effect of producing an extraordinarily effective vehicle for the acquisition and exercise of power. The powerful alliance of the former and the latter attacked the elected governments of two administrations, one of each political party. One government abdicated. The other chose to fight. The party whose administration had chosen to abdicate allied itself with the forces of its erstwhile enemies and seeks to bring the conflict within the framework of conventional political strife, albeit by invoking the extraordinary power to impeach, thus to regain lost political ascendancy.

To be understood, the struggle must be seen for what it is and the antagonists for who and what they are.

What is going on is nothing new in the history of man or of governments. It is a contest for power.

THE CURRENT STRUGGLE in the United States had its genesis in the coincident rise of mass-communication technology and a corruption of journalism called, accurately, "advocacy journalism," allied with a corrupt element of the academic community to form a potent force.

Advocacy journalism must not be mistaken for the expression of editorial opinion. The latter is clearly labeled

as such and serves a necessary function. Advocacy journalism perceives as a virtue the denial of reality, the substitution of the subjective "ought" for the objective "is"; it seeks not to observe and report so as to provide a data base for the taking of decisions by the people but to advance goals of its practitioner's selection. This is accomplished not through overt advocacy, as in the editorial or other identified expression of opinion, but covertly, through selection, distortion, omission, and, on occasion, fabrication.

Stated another way, advocacy journalism seeks to shape events rather than to report them so that they may be shaped, to the extent that can be done, by the legitimate (constitutional) wielders of power. Advocacy journalists claim derivative constitutional legitimacy from a reading of the First Amendment which stretches liberty into license. In the constant, natural struggle for power, they must be seen as combatants, as distinct from neutral observers of the battle.

Some function as columnists—a mutant strain, half legitimate (as their work is labeled as opinion), half corrupt (as they employ deception). The processes of life, including that of government, are not difficult to understand for one who has an average intellect and an education which has included a study of history that avoided substituting for what occurred what one might wish to have occurred.

With outstanding exceptions, such as the late Stewart Alsop, the columnist is a latter-day witch doctor, one who expends half his effort asserting that things are terribly complex and difficult to understand, and who then proceeds to explain the riddle he has just created. For this feat he expects the deference once accorded a priest of *Ra*. Most columnists are harmless, however. An inbred group, they write primarily for, and receive most of their attention from, their fellow *shamans* and may be looked upon as a form of entertainment. Advocacy journalists, on the other hand, as skilled practitioners of deception possessed of ubiquitous technical means the better to mislead, are dangerous. The only remedy available to an individual is a genuine education, one resulting in an intellect uncorrupted by wishful thinking, chauvinism, or other perceptual distortions such as those attributable to race, religion, or sex.

Mankind is but lately on this earth. He is the most highly developed of the *fauna* to date, but, in point of geological time, still in an early stage of evolution. Other animals can think, communicate, and use tools (see recent experiments with high primates), but man is a quantum leap ahead of the rest.

Man got where he is today by the process of natural selection—the survival of the fittest. That process, despite having been slowed somewhat by the application of pity to the uses of medical science, continues (near-extinction of Brazilian Indian tribes, for example) and well-intentioned interventions into the workings of nature are usually disastrous, as witness the Sahel. In the words of an American poet:

"If ye'd turn on the gas in th' darkest heart, ye'd find it had good raison for th' worst things it done, a good varchous raison, like needin' th' money or punishin' the wicked or tacin' people a lesson to be more careful, or protectin' th' liberties iv mankind, or needin' th' money."

—Finley Peter Dunne

Observations by Mr. Dooley, 1902

*This is the Law of the Yukon, that only the Strong shall thrive;
That surely the Weak shall perish, and only the Fit survive.**

What is true of individual men is true of nations.

The United States, though having a large population, still-vast natural resources, lesser but still-formidable geographical position, and possessed of high technology and wealth, is a weakened nation. Her people are divided, her institutions corrupted by a refusal to acknowledge (perhaps now an inability to perceive) the real and thus an inability to deal with it. Her armed forces are weak. She is in the throes of an as-yet-bloodless civil war in which there is being attempted an act analogous to regicide.

Compare if you will the mind-set of the World War II U.S. Marine Corps or SS division *Leibstandarte*, as either went into battle, with the ill-disciplined, often drugged dropouts that make up a significant portion of the nation's armed forces today.

One is reminded of the France of 1940. The French had more troops, more tanks than the Germans, more of everything, save the tough, disciplined, confident *esprit* of the German soldier.

The master who instructed me in the deadliest of the Oriental martial arts taught me that the outcome of a battle is decided in the minds of the opponents before the first blow is struck. So it was in France in 1940. Adolph Hitler's secret weapon was not the devastatingly innovative combination of the *stuka* and the *panzer*. It was in the fighting spirit of the German soldier, each of whom carried *blitzkrieg* in his breast. My teacher was right; the battle for France was over before it began.

Jump ahead to the Battle of Britain. The superb combination of the Merlin engine and the elliptical wing notwithstanding, the heart of the Supermarine *Spitfire* ticked under the tunic of the pilot from Fighter Command.

What would the Red Army, Rommel's *Afrika Korps*, Patton's Third Army, or "Chesty" Puller's Marine Corps do to the U.S. Army that "wants to join you"? To ask that question is to answer it. But let the blame fall where it belongs—and it does not belong upon our youth.

ANOTHER WEAKNESS of the United States today lies in the exaltation of the young. The young are without experience and a record of performance in the adult world. There is no reason to defer to their opinion on adult subjects, as they are without credentials. As it is the duty of the adult to form the youth, the blame for their deficiencies of education and character must fall largely upon the adult population.

Consider the education we offer today: rather than offend what is perceived to be his tender psyche, we promote the youth from one grade to the next although he has not mastered the work, thus producing high-school "graduates" who are functional illiterates. We persist in occupying the time of even the abler students with such nonsense courses as "black studies" and other "relevant" subjects so as to graduate children who are "well-adjusted" rather than educated. Rare is the student who has the wit to realize that he or she is being cheated by his adult men-

* Robert William Service, "The Law of the Yukon," *Songs of a Sourdough*.

tors; were he able to perceive it, there would be little he could do about it. No, the blame must fall upon the adults.

It is the fault of the parent who defaults to the school system, which defaults to the state bureaucracy, which defaults to the federal bureaucracy, which defaults to a class of academic nitwit such as Charles Reich, who celebrates "the greening of America" while what is taking place is the yellowing of America.

There is nothing wrong with American youth which cannot be cured by parents who see to it that their local schools teach reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, history, geography, and science; who see that they grade examinations fairly and objectively, passing those who pass and failing those who fail, all the while enforcing such discipline in the class that there exists an atmosphere conducive to learning. Parents must ensure that their children do their homework and stay out of trouble after school on pain of effective discipline, the whole followed by a minimum of two years of obligatory universal military training and service in armed forces led by tough, professional cadres. Those few who refuse to serve may be provided a one-way ticket to Canada or the Scandinavian country of their choice.

How to rear the young? What virtues should be cultivated, what vices discouraged? What criteria have we to guide us as parents in the raising of our children and, as citizens, in the improvement of our country?

First, the young should be raised in harmony with nature. Nature is elitist. By definition, not everyone can be a member of an elite—but it is of the nature of men to try.

We are fortunate that our country fosters an aristocracy

of merit. True enough that from time to time the boss's son gets the job; but then someone must be hired to *do* the job, and that someone will be the best available, absent governmental interference on the basis of some perceived "ought," such as racial, ethnic, or sexual balance.

In raising our children, we must orient ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in every endeavor. There is dignity and worth in every kind of human labor. Each is worthy of, and presents the opportunity for, excellent performance. Those who achieve it will form automatically the elite of that trade, craft, profession, or art.

As a corollary, it must be recognized that there is no dignity, if not a form of degradation, in living on the dole when one is capable of work, and to that end it should be a governmental goal to foster the conditions necessary for full employment either in the United States or in extra-territorial spheres of influence.

Central to the pursuit of excellence is competition. The only standard available by which excellence may be measured is the performance of the same task by other humans. If a child is able to surpass his peers at each stage of childhood, he will probably continue that pattern and surpass them as an adult, thereby achieving elite status. From such men and women come our leaders—competitors all.

The emphasis upon competitive spirit is of the greatest importance. Not only is it in conformity with nature, it is nearly always the key to the full realization of human potential. Given equal or even less talent, in any contest the stronger man will win. I do not mean physical strength. I mean strength of personality, that combination of confidence and determination which arises from self-knowl-

edge, an understanding of the world as it is and one's relation to it, the natural laws that control its workings, and the drive to excel.

Strength, or personal force, is the ability to focus psychic energy, to persevere until all obstacles are overcome, to be able not only to tolerate adversity but to recognize it as a natural condition and turn it to advantage. An example of the latter may be seen in the case of a physical contest.

There is a need for physical strength, for the body is the repository of the personality, and the ability physically to outlast an opponent and resist adverse circumstances is important. But if any one component of a man ought to be exercised, cultivated, and strengthened above all others, it is the will; and that will must have but one objective—to win.

Consider a physical contest, man on man, such as distance running or swimming. Because of the way these sports are organized, the contestants will be nearly equal in physical ability. All will start at the same time and proceed at nearly the same pace. There will come a time in the course of the race when pain will occur. It is a natural phenomenon, a signal from the body that it is being extended, is under stress, and should, in normal circumstances, be given a rest to recoup its strength. Pain may be compared to the performance monitoring system on an aircraft. Just as sensors alert the pilot that cylinder-head temperatures are too high and the engine is being overworked, or that airspeed has exceeded design limitations, so pain alerts the mind that the body is overstressed. Pain, therefore, should be welcomed as an information conduit.

Some items of military equipment, provided with sensors to monitor performance, alert the operator to stress, and shut down the equipment automatically under such conditions, contain a switch by which the operator may bypass the automatic protective mechanism. To be employed only in the most extreme circumstances, it is the "battle override."

THE ELITE COMPETITOR knows that as pain strikes him in the course of a race it is striking his opponents at approximately the same time. He recognizes this situation as an opportunity and welcomes it. Employing his will as a battle override, he redoubles his efforts and, if his physical conditioning is sufficient, wins. There is little danger in this practice, as, when the body is exhausted completely, it just stops functioning. Nothing more can be done at that point but to make a mental note to condition it further for the future. The champion competitor will find, however, that few of his opponents have the strength of will to drive through pain all the way to the point of total collapse. The ability to do so is an enormous advantage, not only in sport, but in the training provided the will. With continued attention it can remain indomitable and thus able to resist coercion on the one hand, and on the other to wear down those who resist it in the achieving of its objectives. There is no more powerful weapon available for the constant battle that is life.

The most indomitable will, however, is of no avail unless married to an educated intellect: Place a man of powerful will before a diesel engine with the command to repair it,

and he will be unable to do so if he does not understand what it is and how it is supposed to work. That is also true when one introduces a man into this world; and what is true of men is true of those institutions composed of men—nations.

The United States of America was formed from colonies of Georgian Britons. It is important that the world view of the mother country be understood, as its citizens and leaders were of the same stock as the Founders of our country and shared an understanding of the world that was and is in accord with reality. That world view has best been articulated by the British historian Correlli Barnett as follows:

*In the eighteenth century the English ruling classes—squirearchy, merchants, aristocracy—were men hard of mind and hard of will. Aggressive and acquisitive, they saw foreign policy in terms of concrete interest: markets, natural resources, colonial real estate, naval bases, profits. At the same time they were concerned to preserve the independence and parliamentary institutions of England in the face of the hostility of European absolute monarchies. Liberty and interest alike seemed to the Georgians therefore to demand a strategic approach to international relations. They saw national power as the essential foundation of national independence; commercial wealth as a means to power; and war as among the means to all three. They accepted it as natural and inevitable that nations should be engaged in a ceaseless struggle for survival, prosperity and predominance. Such public opinion as existed in the eighteenth century did not dissent from this world-view.**

It must be remembered that the Founders of the United States were members of the ruling classes of the colonies, the "squirearchy, merchants, aristocracy." They were men equally "hard of mind and hard of will. Aggressive and acquisitive." When England enforced the mercantilist laws against them, they found themselves on an economic one-way street. Predictably, such men rebelled and, by force of arms, went after what they wanted—a piece of the action. They got it and we are enjoying it today. In short, the men who formed our nation understood man and his world. It is only when we lose sight of reality that we are in danger of losing our way as a people and a nation.

Great Britain started to decline as a nation and lost her empire when her people fell victim to a combination of romantic idealism and evangelical religion. Her leaders started taking national decisions based upon what was "right" according to a subjective vision of what ought to be, as opposed to what was wise according to a hard-headed, national-interest-minded view of objective reality. It was nearly 200 years before British power had all been leached away. She was able to last that long on the momentum of her dynamic, even gaining new territory along the way; becoming, if you will, a "red giant" before collapsing into a "white dwarf."

I fear that the United States is in danger of succumbing to the same malady.

The Soviet equivalent of evangelical religion and romantic idealism is Marxist-Leninist ideology. The Soviet Union, consciously or coincidentally following the practice of Rome as remarked upon with approval by Machiavelli,**

* Correlli Barnett, *The Collapse of British Power* (New York: William Morrow & Co., Inc., 1972), p. 20.

** Machiavelli, op. cit., pp. 156-58.

pays due lip service to Marxist-Leninist ideology. I am confident, however, that her leaders are under no illusions as to the nature of man and the world. Marshal Grechko, we may be sure, puts his faith in rockets, tanks, a thoroughly trained and toughly disciplined army, and a rapidly growing navy to advance the growth of Soviet power and ensure that nation's continued independence—not in ideology. He takes his decisions upon a knowledge of the effects of nuclear fusion, not a belief in imminent proletarian revolt within the United States.

Adolf Hitler and Joseph Stalin respected each other to the end of their mortal conflict. Indeed, while the propaganda organs of the United States, Germany, Russia, and Japan all spewed forth tributes to respective ideologies during the second world war—Judeo-Christian religion, Nietzscheism, Marxism-Leninism, and Bushido-Shinto—in the end the leaders of all four countries put their faith in *panzers*, not in prayer.

FOR A MAN OR A NATION to be truly strong, each must be able to stand utterly alone, able to meet and deal with life relying solely upon his own inner resources. There may be no crutch of any kind employed, for when a crutch is removed, although one may retain balance for a short time, to fall is inevitable.

Let the virtues to be practiced, then, be those natural to man: duty, loyalty, patriotism.

must be regarded as but a minimum standard of conduct.

Loyalty, too, is found in and based upon nature. Who has not heard of, if not observed, a friendship between animals of different species—a dog and a cat, for example? There is no natural obligation between them; they *choose* to associate, and, in such instances, one may observe between them a bond of *loyalty*. The most common interspecies example is that of a man and his dog. Virtually everyone has observed, if not experienced, the operation of loyalty between them.

Thus, when a human chooses to enter into a relationship with another human or group of humans not arising from nature (a corporation or union, for example), he is under no more *obligation* than he undertakes. True enough, he may assume obligations which require a corresponding *duty* to his associates, but there is not *required* that which is *beyond* duty: *loyalty*.

Loyalty, then, is a true virtue. As the highest of the animals, one would expect man to practice that virtue to the highest degree. You can imagine my reaction, therefore, when in recent times I discovered that the loyalty of several of my former associates to our mutual leader was of a standard unequal to that of a dog.

The word *patriotism* is derived from the Greek word for "father." There is a logic to that, for indeed a man's country is a father to him. There is nothing more natural than that a man refer to his country as his "fatherland."

It is of the nature of men to love their fathers and to

Duty arises from obligation; one cannot exist without the other. It is, therefore, to be expected of one who bears a duty that he perform it. He is, consequently, entitled to no special regard when he does so as he is doing merely what he and every other person situated similarly is obliged to do. It does not follow, however, that because performance of duty is not especially praiseworthy, that it is not important. On the contrary, it is the bedrock upon which rests man's natural interaction with his fellowman.

The primary unit of society is the family. Each additional grouping of men is but an amplification of that basic unit: the tribe, the village, the state, the nation. Nature dictates that each member of a family discharge a role obligation with respect to every other family member. Thus a father has a *duty* to protect his young, and, when the youth is sufficiently mature, there devolves upon him a similar obligation to assist in the protection of other members of the family. This natural law may be seen in operation very clearly in the activities of the lower animals as well as (if not, these days, in a superior fashion) in man.

Similarly, as one progresses through the various levels of organization (in the case of the lower animals from the individual family unit to the pack or herd, etc.) to the tribe, village, state, and nation, it may be seen that each organizational stage places upon the individual obligations peculiar to that stage, from which arises a corresponding duty. For man to function as man, therefore, he must always and everywhere *do his duty*; and to do so

revere them. Who has not known of a man who is considered generally to be less than admirable, but who is nevertheless loved truly by his children, who will fight at the first derogatory word directed toward him?

Some of our citizens, I among them, were smiled upon by fortune when the accident of birth provided us with a father who is an exemplary man*; but every man and woman born to or adopted by this nation is the beneficiary of the greatest stroke of fortune life can provide. This country, our fatherland, does more than nurture and protect us when we are young and weak. America provides an opportunity available nowhere else on earth to achieve every potential buried in our genes, identified by the intellect, and targeted as a goal by the will.

In return, she asks only that we do our duty as her son or daughter, as we understand that duty. She does not ask our loyalty, or the love we know as patriotism. Those must, and should, come unbidden freely from our hearts.

Love,



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* And, in my case, with an equally exemplary woman for my mother.