

JAN 2 1973

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12/21/72

Dear Js,

What I wanted that backs on the enclosed VN stuff from today's Post I've copied. I think that, bearing on what I've been saying, the inside Kilpatrick piece is worth noting. The only marks I've made are where they are easily removed, and their only purpose is so that you will not skim them too rapidly. I suspect this inside piece was written earlier. As is traditional, today's was one of the years smallest Sunday editions, if not the very smallest, regardless of the developments, this means less space, in turn less need for Saturday overtime, etc. Treatment is less extensive that it would have been under other circumstances, I feel.

My own view is that a combination of things forced the Nixon turnaround and that there was absolutely no new signal from VN. The cost was incredible. There was, I think on CBS TV new evening news last night, a cost tabulation that, from U.S. figures alone, comes to more than a half billion, and that in money alone. It included 93 men, as I'll be astounded if the count is close.

I have no way of knowing if any TopB rass made any reference to what had happened and was continuing to happen to their prized retaliatory force, but I'd be surprized if someone in or out of AF didn't make noises about B52s, which can't be turned out that fast. And, because of what ~~xxx~~^{these} stone-age heathen have done to the justification of the planned new bomber.

World reaction was undoubtedly greater than we know, no matter how well it may have been reported outside the east. Crazy to incur and sustain that. The Embassies must have poured an tremendous amount into State.

I think it likely that someone climbed the mountain behind my back as I write this, andna little to the left of the back, and had something to say about over-reaction (Palme) and how everyone, down to the Hotentot foreign offices, would take it.

My views on intent and direction are unchanged. I think someone told Dick to slow down if he really wants to make it. See also Timmons interview, enclosed.

And what he is making is not new as I see it and is addressed in Kilpatrick's piece on his isolation.

I wish I could feel that he has been excessive enough. I think it possible the Saxbes and the Brookses will now back up a bit and say "wait and see". Teddy in particular, aside from his hasty political trick you have just returned, has been very mild

I have seen and heard no reference to Mel Taylor as what he is, a former Army General.

Considering what only a dolt would not realize impends, I can't understand the calm of the Post. How they can have failed to verbatim Friedheim, I can't understand. Maybe they will yet. Better, with pictures, his words as captions. I really think they lack, excuse the vernacular that seems appropriate, the balls. Those precious words on the hospital and the Japenese pictures of it, complete with what is left of the name. Whole levelled areas of Hanoi and his crack about a crashed plane! In some ways, its is a greater crime.

Woodward has a byliner on local dope today. He has covered it before. Does not reflect great owrk on his part. First thing in some time.

Would it not be comforting to be able to believe that tomorrow begins a new and good era?

Best,