

7 May 1972

Dear Harold:

Herewith a whole potful of stuff which has been accumulating ~~while~~ ^{while} your letters of April 15, 17 (?), 21 (2) and 24 came in. I mean those appear to be the dates of mailing. All, of course contain enclosures of differing dates.

Among the most interesting -- to us -- of the enclosed is Mary McGrory's story in the Washington Star dated May 4 concerning a book by Richard Whalen. He was a Nixon speechwriter four years ago and elucidates on Nixon's "secret plan" to end the war in Vietnam. It turns out that it was simply to pressure the Russians into getting the North Vietnamese to quit, and makes the significant statement that Nixon realized there was no way to win the war there with military force. In other words, he saved it up along with the China question to use in the 1972 campaign.

We shall be glad to have your tape of the Felix Greene interview whenever it arrives. No hurry. We've seen very brief references to it, but nothing adequate.

The photocopy of the handwritten letter you sent is certainly fascinating. By now, of course, anything we say about it is academic, but since you asked, our first impression is that it is not disguised handwriting or anything like that. ~~XXX~~ Its peculiarities are entirely too consistent. A handwriting expert probably could tell you a great deal about the writer. We have a couple of small books on the subject, and what they say that is applicable to this case is that the backhand means lefthandedness in an older person and rebellion in one younger. I'm lefthanded myself, and write with a forward slant only by standing on my head, sort of, and know many other lefties who do the same thing. The ones I know who stay with the natural backward slant usually are pretty queer ducks, not only rebellious but highly introverted and with a tendency to be secretive. Another point the books make which seems relevant is that the large, wide loops on letters above ~~above~~ the line indicate great idealism. We of course read the letter looking for a possible trap, and feel that while on the whole it appears unlikely because of a rather convincing air of frankness, it can't be ruled out.

To get back to Nixon, we've come to the conclusion that one of the things Kissinger, if not Nixon, has had in mind, in the whole Vietnamization process, is not to Vietnamize the war, which they knew was impossible, but to Vietnamize the defeat and thus make it less unacceptable to the entire American public, including some of the hawks. It's clear ~~xx~~ that Kissinger is perfectly capable of this sort of indirection, but there's some question as to whether Nixon is capable of seeing it as an alternative. Not from principle, of course, but from his own naturally violent reactions. We still feel his fundamental response to the offensive of the Liberation forces in Vietnam is still to come and could be catastrophic. Certainly the Russians are no more likely to take him off the hook than were the Chinese, and for basically similar political reasons which most Americans appear incapable of visualizing.

From some of the clippings enclosed you will gather that Gerold Frank was in town and got a certain amount of exposure, but we don't know how much in TV or radio. We were all set to tape Eason the day Frank was supposed to be here, and it may be a hopeful sign that Eason didn't show on his program (radio) that day. His substitute said Eason had a sore throat. As far as we know, Frank didn't show either.

We hope you had a good and profitable trip, in terms of information and straightening out some of the tangles that were building up as you took off, if nothing else.

We're intrigued by ~~the~~^{one} of the two skyjackings that took place beginning May 5 -- specifically the one who wound up in Cuba allegedly claiming to be part of a group planning to assassinate Nixon. What could make a candidate more attractive than to have assassins laying for him?

And, as an enclosure indicates, we're impressed with the lack of time in which to autopsy poor Mr. Hoover, indeed with the lack of any need for an autopsy. In view of a) the certainty that he died of natural causes and b) the fact that they couldn't say what he did die of, one can only sympathize with public servants so pressed for time that they can't do their duty. We don't want to alarm you, but this does create a very nice slot for your friend Mr. Kleindienst in case the Senate should be rude enough to turn him down for AG. Of course there are many other equally worthy candidates for Mr. Hoover's job, we all know that, and are comforted accordingly, aren't we?

Only another week to go on this troglodyte shift. Perhaps we can be a bit more responsive when things get back to what we laughingly call normal.

Best,



jdw

[Included with this mailing Je note on tape of Princeton conference on FBI.]