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Nixon-Inaugural address 1/20/73 HW

This instant analysis that would probably be what is meant by elitist rumor or snobbery is that users of those phrases had something legitimate in mind, is inspired by what I think is a gross misreading of the speech by Eric Sevareid immediately after it but based on having read the advance text in advance of delivery.

I missed parts of their beginning (bringing the week's groceries in from the car) and the end (phone call from persistent buff), so I can really address the middle section only. I note some good CBS camera work—a bored Kissinger actually yawning widely and other such touches. I missed EMK's on-camera face when the ask not lines were paraphrased, but CBS was there. I was at the fireplace.

It will take a careful reading of the speech to be as close to certain as one can about any such speech and more about a Dirtytricky one, which I think this really is.

It is not a soft speech, as Severehead and his colleagues intoned, a moderate one.

It is not an isolationist speech. Rather it lays out with some clarity, as Nixonians will later interpret it, the new interventionism.

It is, I believe the keynote of the new kind of authoritarianism we will see.

The copying from JFK was lost upon the pundits, who were pleased at understating, they thought, the ask not. They didn't understand it. There was much more, conscious, copying, sometimes hardly paraphrased in some passages. This time the copying was different in that Nixon had a psychological thing: this was an adversary speech, and JFK is still the major adversary, as is everything he stood for when he whipped Nixon and everything he stood for as he changed and grew with the office.

This was also a Welfare State speech: welfare for the haves, not the have nots: Corporate Welfare not public welfare. The fats cats were there, and very few others.

I guess this is the first non-public inauguration, the first where tickets and somebody's approval and tickets were required. They appear to be all that was not for sale and sold. Thus it is not surprising that the crowd disappeared almost immediately, and 40° weather alone does not account for that.

If these are not history's smallest crowds, I'll be surprised. That might with some thought be compared to history's largest majority, which he had.

Orderliness was carried to the extreme, as befits a well-ordered authoritarianism. Whoever made the arrangements had the procession all of light convertibles, all identical from the pictures I saw, which has as a by-product either an enormous profit for some dealer(s), who will then sell Nixon inaugural cars, or an enormous loss, if there is no demands for them.