

JUL 27 1973

Dear Jim,

7/26/73

Your mailing of the 23, which much help in it (and the first Hoppe for a while, a real treat - I miss him on NatPubRadio, bad time) came today. When I don't take Lil into town, the mail is delivered. We didn't go out for it until the break in the hearings (I think they'll run over now). Because I now have 1 1/2 of three lawnmowers, I mowed in heavy weeds until an hour before the resumption, cooled a bit wheil I read the enclosres, took a dip to cool more, tne read into the beginning of the p.m. session.

I've had mixed feelings about the hearings. These take firmer form with Whrlichman's toying with them for two days. Each of the members has his own thing and for his constituency does it well. I enjoy old Sam much, and he morlizes magnificently. But evidence that could have been adduced - this guy, mtough as he is, could and would break -s iscant, soming entirely from is offered into evidence in documentary form or from his slackening of a remarkable self-control and a little blabbing. I have found his loose talk worth-while. This Nazi is as intelligent as he is arrogant.

Baker appears more and more to me to be a man running for President, not for the fullest truth in the hearings. He makes a great appearance, but virtually nothing comes as a result of his questioning. He messed up a beauty today. He accomplished his purpose, to make it seem that he is a diligent digger and not in GL's pocket, but he pooped out. Instead of setting up the "azi's defense in advance on that omitted graf, he should have goine immediately into the other diplomatic bag jobs and let them claim "national defense" on those.

So, the entertainment value is high, but the yiled is a small fraction of the words used. One of the things to have done with him after a period of initial politeness was to insist in yes or no answers and then permit explanations, with the chairman immediately ruling on relevance and responsiveness. There is an answer in the long opening statement they permitted. They could even offer a closer. But they'd rattle the bastard and I would imagine tha t when he blows, it would be like Vesuvius.

Scott: check and thanks.

I've been writing away, usually earlt a.m., when I first get up. Days I take til in-3- less production. I feel that it will organize itself better as I write. I'd decided on the way to begin and didn't have to outline that. I've got maybe 20-25,000 words done, aside from up to more than a dozen pages of snatches on one subject. Numerous shorter ones. Looks like a big book on which I still have no word.

The more time passes, the more I can see that can be omitted, and a large part of this committee's work, to now, seems easily omitted. Especially with the format of an intelligence analyst working not with secrets but with the readily available. I'm saving as much space as I can in my mind for Hunt.

By the way, as a measure of the real audience pull of these hearings, ABC-TV has not been content to tale its third day. It has broadcast every minute. NBC and CBS alone are rotating. The half-time yiled is poor. I'd imagine radio is better on this, but during the recesses I try to catch up with the clips. I start the day with them, clipping during the a.m. TV news. I write until then. Today was very productive. I found the CBS interview with Ekksberg great and the one with Weicher second half good but ill-advised. He let what he had out himself.

By now you have seen Witcover's storybon how the bugging was learned about, I credit it. I've had the same kind of unexpected blurting out by troubled witnesses often enough. In his case, I think he was part of the spidering of loyalists into the executive agencies, andnther means of establishing a "Qonstitutional" authoritarianism, I can believe he feared Ehrlichman or more, Haldeman of Higby, may have told the truth. So, if his conscience didn't bother him, fear of a perjury charge could have. I don't see many who have no need going to jail and runing reputations for GL. In general, I'd say that for the most part only the dedicated Nazis aren't personally worried by now, with what has come out.

ii share your fear on Hunt's lasting powers. Our letters crossed on this. However, I think they are holding him for a big bust and that he can blow. He is bitter, vindictive, hurt and hurt personally, feels betrayed, and wants to get even. His just happens to be his best bet for relief in the sentence. My real hop right now is that they taped his interview or had a reported taking it down.

I've got a hunch that he played along, at their request, byt not getting paid for the last quarter of his WH employment. Thatwill be a killer if true and he says.