

Sept 29 -

Dear Doug -

Holly sent me your note. Good to hear from you and I'm not at all surprised to hear that you are frustrated about your own future. You won't give me credit, of course, but I told you so! My advice, which you are probably not seeking, is to go off & write for a while. You are excellent at it & can affect the course of human affairs a hell of a lot more that way than busy drawing up wills or assisting in the defense of some anti-trust suit. It's the wrong time to get back into Government. Make your own independent mark. You will never last in a law firm. Either you will get terribly bored or you'll piss someone off in 6 months. Having said that, that will probably goad you into doing it. Follow your own natural talents - and that is writing, constructively, creatively & honestly. It is a rare gift & you have it. The Monitor might be one place to hang your hat - the important thing is not just to report, but to provoke thought. That you can do as a sideline.

I'm glad you are writing about the Nixon Years. If you steal any of the stuff I'm writing for my book, I can't do a damn thing about it but I'll come back to haunt you. Except for the stuff we worked on together, anything else I told you is obviously fair game. I'm waiting on Publisher's bids now for the outline I submitted long way of Ken Adams & my agent some months ago. I did a great deal of the manuscript before I came in to Prison - about 700 pages. I can't do much



here because I don't have the time or facilities -  
but I'm continuing to scratch away. I'm  
in no hurry - Nixon's Book won't sell, if he  
ever writes it which I doubt. Haldeman  
can't tell the truth & won't have the time.  
Schickelman will be a long time getting to it, if  
ever. The Holt book on Kissinger has some  
good stuff but it is an apology, and a transparent  
transparent one at that. I was offered  
an extravagant 6 figure advance in June  
from a Top House and turned it down. They  
wanted a book which concentrated heavily  
on me & my religious conversions. I'll  
write that someday but NOT Now. "It  
would be wrong", to quote a recent  
friend, to "capitalize" on my conversions.  
Paul went off to the desert for 3 years  
before he began to preach. Someday I'll  
write that Book but not right away.  
I don't want to cheapen ~~it~~ my own spiritual  
commitment - "Colson finds God in Watergate"  
is a bit much. The book I am writing -  
an honest & complete account of the whole  
period, good & bad - is what I feel  
compelled to write. I feel it is an obligation  
to do so because historians will be tearing  
this period apart trying to find out what  
really happened. I modestly believe I  
can write the most honest & trustworthy  
account. The Publishing Houses are less eager  
to make big advance commitments for  
this kind of Book. It is hard to judge  
what the market will be a year or 18 months  
hence. They are concerned lest there be no  
interest in Nixon or his years. I'm betting  
there will be & so I'm proceeding & not



pushing for a firm contract. I'll wait + I know I can get the price I want (Plenty!) The Publishers are Scavengers. The offer for Paper back rights to a book on religion + Colson, a quick, superficial book for mass distribution is mind-boggling. But a serious Book of importance to preserving an honest history of the period scares them. So be it. I'm plugging along my way, as I always have - for better or worse -

This is no picnic but I'm managing - It is frustrating as Hell in view of the Nixon Pardon. I can't for the life of me understand how Ford justifies the moral Quantity of pardoning the chief culprit + leaving the captains + lieutenants in jail.

It hurts. I guess we are the fool guys. Keeping us locked up will satisfy the public thirst for blood. Ford has taken Nixon off the Hook + deescalated the Political issue long run (not short term). It ain't much fun to be caught in the middle, however.

My feelings about Nixon changed in April. He was all finished when he put out those incredible tapes. I realized, then, that his judgement had deteriorated to the point that he could not safely govern the Country. I also realized for the first time that he had deliberately excluded me from the sensitive cover-up discussions because he didn't trust me. I had no personal feelings in the matter. The reason he didn't trust me was a compliment to me, as you will see in time when certain February + March tapes are ~~at least~~ released, if they ever are. I was the one guy talking him to ~~break~~ break it open. I shattered the cozy little



arrangement between Nixon, JDE, HRH + Dean -  
the June 23 Tape broke my heart because I  
found out when that was ~~not~~ released that he  
had lied to me. I didn't think he would - but  
in fact he did.

Other Presidents had their own cover ups (Bobby  
Baker etc) Nixon's greatest failure was in lying  
to the American people. It was irreparable.

He was stuck with it from the beginning, obviously  
and everything he did made it worse. Had  
he admitted the mistake, it would have been  
over + done with. His judgement was incredibly  
bad - lying + then preserving the evidence  
that would prove he had lied. I don't know  
how he thought he could get away with it.

The bottom line is that I am glad he  
resigned; he should have in April + spared  
the country + his own reputation + place in  
history. The real tragedy is that he took  
everything + everyone down with him in the  
process. It turned out that he really had  
no loyalty to anyone. It is one of the  
major reasons I decided to plead. I  
just couldn't any longer be a defendant.  
Regardless of my own guilt of specific acts  
charged (I do not believe I should have  
been indicted, as you know), I just  
no longer in conscience could defend Nixon  
or be part of the whole sordid mess. I  
also felt a certain moral responsibility.  
I helped create the monster which destroyed  
us. I was it all that different from the  
others, only a little slimmer in staying out  
(at least so I thought) of the stuff I thought  
to be illegal. But in this kind of national  
tragedy, that is a distinction without a  
difference - and so I decided to pay my



peace and be at peace with myself & my  
own conscience. I am. In the final analysis  
I probably had a lot to do with bringing  
Nixon down. My Testimony at the Rodino committee  
was damaging to him, more so than the Press  
realized. I didn't want to hurt him but  
I simply told the Truth. He really destroyed  
himself and I feel for him as a human  
being. I couldn't live with what he has  
to, and I doubt that he can for long.

It was an ugly period - Both sides  
acted at times without principle. I hope  
the Country can soon repair the damage  
but I fear it will take Years - particularly  
if Ford continues to make the same mistakes  
Nixon made - God, its painful to watch.  
These guys didn't learn a Thing - the same  
P.R. bit, the same exaggerated Rhetoric.  
They are falling into the Trap. Sometimes  
I think the water is poisoned at 1600.

So there it is - mixed feelings. I'm  
hurt but not bitter. I'm terribly  
disappointed in RD & have been for months  
but I can't hate him or want to see him  
hurt more. I feel compassion towards  
him & some of the things he did were great.  
I can't turn on him in human terms.  
I simply don't do that to a friend even when  
the friend fails me or fails himself. I just  
Pity the Man. He did it to himself. The  
Truth did him in - the Tragedy is that  
so much else was destroyed in the process.

In time, this with Ross & RA look  
forward to seeing You. In the meantime, keep  
Your fertile mind active & keep Your faith in  
something. Don't become a professional chronic cynic -  
Sorry about the Handwriting - Best I can do -  
Curtis