

The original documents are located in Box 40, folder “Ford, Gerald - Hersey, John, "Six Days with the President" ” of the Sheila Weidenfeld Files at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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Newsweek, April 21, 1975

Periscope



Richard E. Ward

HIS SERENE HIGHNESS

Conservatives in the coalition government of Laos are jittery over events in Cambodia and South Vietnam. They fear that Communist successes in those neighboring countries will spur Laos's Pathet Lao Reds (above) to press for more power. However, the U.S.-backed Laotian Premier, Prince Souvanna Phouma, remains "placid and undisturbed," according to U.S. officials. The Prince predicts that his "national reconciliation" policy will prevail if Cambodia, Vietnam and even Thailand fall under Communist rule.

NO. 1 IN THE SUN

Saudi Arabia, owner of the biggest oil reserves in the world, plans to supply its own power needs from an even more plentiful resource—the sun. (The desert kingdom averages fewer than seven rainy days a year.) The government will soon issue invitations to solar scientists, technicians, manufacturers and salesmen to discuss the idea. The Saudis want to shift to solar energy to save their oil for more productive uses—manufacture of food, fertilizers and medicines.

SSHH! THEY'RE LISTENING

American Seabees remodeling offices in the U.S. Embassy in Moscow have uncovered more than a dozen listening devices planted in the walls. Embassy officials won't confirm the number but do say most of the bugs were inoperative. They also suspect that scaffolding erected by Soviet workmen for the construction contains more bugs, hidden in pipes driven into the building façade to hold the scaffolds.

REAGAN ROILS THE BRITISH

Ronald Reagan took his non-campaign for President across the Atlantic last week for a speech that sent the British Foreign Office into a tizzy. Addressing the annual dinner of the Pilgrims of Great Britain in London, the former California governor inveighed against "the Communist take-over of Portugal" and the opportunity it gave the Soviet Union to redraw the map

of Europe. London insists that Lisbon has not "gone Communist" and, with proper NATO support, can be kept out of Red control. Remarks like Reagan's, the Foreign Office feels, can only hurt non-Communist parties still active in Portugal.

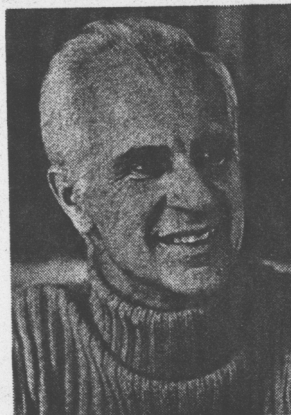
SIMON SAYS - BUT

Treasury Secretary William Simon's view that a \$75 billion Federal deficit could imperil recovery by overwhelming the credit market is not shared by his own hand-picked expert on the subject. Dr. Sally Ronk, "flow-of-funds" adviser on Simon's staff, says "there really should be no problem, unless the Federal Reserve refuses to ease up a little. Private demand for funds is down and the savings flows are really huge."

FORD'S TRAVEL PLANS

President Ford did not reveal to last week's TV audience the complete itinerary for his visit to Peking this fall. In addition to China, he hopes to stop in India, Pakistan and possibly Bangladesh on the return trip from the Chinese capital.

SIX DAYS WITH THE PRESIDENT



William H. Wittstein

Pulitzer Prize-winning author John Hersey, who once filled an entire issue of *The New Yorker* with an account of the destruction of Hiroshima, has completed a similar assignment for *The New York Times Magazine*—a full issue devoted to a week in the life of Gerald Ford. The writer, now a lecturer at Yale, was tapped for the job on the strength of a 1951 series he wrote for *The New Yorker* on Harry S. Truman. Hersey spent six days in March with President Ford, including sitting in on Oval Office meetings, for which Ford briefed him beforehand. Except for some top-secret decisions, Hersey's access to the President was total. After publication, the article may become a book.

COME FLY WITH ME

Iraq's soaring plans to expand its commercial air service have run into personnel problems. Last year, Baghdad added five Boeing jets to its fleet and has ordered eight more for 1976 delivery, including four jumbo 747s—a purchase worth about \$200 million in Iraqi petrodollars. The trouble is that Iraq lacks the pilots to staff such a fleet, and recruiters are now canvassing U.S. airlines trying to line up crews.

—JOHN A. CONWAY with bureau reports

Letters

Man and mask

There is something surreal, absurd, infuriating about John Hersey's portrait of President Ford just sitting there like a courteous Iron Duke, calmly directing traffic and placating an inept bureaucracy (aspiring more to teamwork than to performance) in a nation and a world coming apart at the seams and desperately seeking the affirmative leadership which the American Presidency is uniquely capable of providing ("The President," April 20).

I hope Hersey missed it: That somewhere inside Gerald Ford there is that spark of leadership, that gut feeling Harry Truman had for the individual victimized by institutions which are supposed to serve him but are mainly

looking out for themselves. Yet, the only flashes of anything approaching executive thrust in Hersey's observation were that the President doesn't want the C.I.A. to assassinate political leaders, and he does want the Navy to get off its ass and let the people get some oil out of Elk Hills. There is the terrifying suggestion that the wellsprings may indeed be dry—sterilized in youth of ideas and enthusiasms, additionally safeguarded by a loyal wife, who brings him down to earth from occasional illusions.

Who is the man inside the mask under such tight control? What are those suppressed illusions? Is there any vision at all beyond respect for orderly constitutional processes (surely desirable,



but hardly sufficient)? Where does he want America to go 200 years after its revolutionary genesis and promise?

I feel baffled and frustrated by this imperturbable man, who studies so hard and recites the lessons so well but

seems himself to miss the point.

CHARLES E. ALLEN
New York City

Creditable?

Congratulations on John Hersey's superbly written rendering of the almost unbelievable breadth and depth of impressions which an unusually sensitive reporter can note and ponder when he spends six working days with a President. I was reassured by things that reassured Mr. Hersey. I was alarmed by things that alarmed him. Plus one. Hersey writes: "Donald Rumsfeld . . . in 1970 entered the White House as [Nixon's] Counselor . . . To Rumsfeld's credit, he eventually was given the shudders by Haldeman and Ehrlichman, and he had himself shot out as far away from them as he could be—to Brussels, as Ambassador to NATO."

One wonders whether a citizen who had the shudders that

bad didn't also have an obligation that went beyond getting his own skirts out of the mire, an obligation that maybe even went as far as blowing a whistle. But then Hersey does tell us that this is a "bright, jealous, crafty and fiercely combative" citizen. "Credit?"

JOHN J. ANGEVIN
Assistant Editor,
The Christian Century
Chicago

Wanted: Flamboyance

It was refreshing to see a jockey highlighted as an important athlete ("Angel on horseback," April 27), but Clayton Riley's attempts to show us Angel Cordero as anything more than that were in vain. After several seasons of sporadic association with the backstretch, I can only say that to describe Cordero as "fiery [and] flamboyant" is akin to telling us that the
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