MEMORANDUM

TO: HON. PHILIP B. PERLMAN

You have been sent a copy of Harb Beaser's memo to me, setting forth the result of his combing of the New York Times in accordance with my instructions to him, which, in turn, were in accordance with your request and your interest in doing something about this subject.

I think Beaser has done an exhaustive piece of work here. As he indicates in his memo to me, however, the results of his inquiries do not constitute the kind of a record that we would like to see, or that we thought we might find.

Basically, the record confirms what we suspected; namely, that Nixon really did not play a major role even in the investigation. Indeed, he was, as Beaser told us, on a slow boat to Panama at the time the sensational material was turned up. He had left on a vacation -- a sea voyage -- that's how hot he was on Hiss' trail. But he was Chairman of the Subcommittee, and was supposed to look into the discrepancy between the testimony of Hiss and Chambers, and those who have left the only records that we have in the matter have built up Nixon's role because he was the only one who could be built up. Both Andrews and Stripling used Nixon -- Stripling to give the color of authority to his (Stripling's) acts, and Andrews, to help him (Andrews) run down a story that Andrews thought was there. Andrews was right in his hunch, but he incidentally helped Nixon to get a commendation ribbon which Nixon has since converted into the Congressional Medal of Honor.

I don't think we can do very much on this business. I don't think we can clearly nail Nixon as a liar, although he undoubtedly is one, in this instance, as in others. But the facts aren't, in my judgment, crystal-clear enough. This is my judgment. What is yours?

Obviously, Beaser has not only read the New York Times, but has read the Chambers book, too; so he has done not only the research that you wanted our office to do, but also the research that you were going to do yourself.

On a little reflection, and without having what I have dictated before me to re-read, I am afraid that I have been perhaps a little too bearish on this matter. This material is certainly useful to have in reserve, and perhaps it wouldn't do any harm at all for the record to be made, in a factual way, in a letter to the New York Times, as you originally proposed. But I still feel that
the approach should be high-level and without passion or emotion of any kind. We should lean to understatement, and play it poker-faced rather than with passion. Your letter to the New York Times, if written at all, should be written in the tone of one who wants to make sure that the boys in the FBI and the Justice Department get their share of the credit — not as between Nixon and Truman, but as between Nixon and the little fellows who did the work down the line.

(Transcription)

J.C.C.E.