

October 1, 1969

Personal

MEMORANDUM FOR

H. R. HALDEMAN

As you know, and have been unfailingly sensitive to, it is difficult for me to offer political advice to the President, or more particularly to his aides. I have been an active Democrat, and if they allow me (which alas I doubt) I will be one again.

But for the moment I am doing something I happen to know something about: serving a President of the United States. This normally should involve giving one's opinion on political matters. Normally, however, I do not. There are exceptions.

One exception occurred last Friday morning when I tried to state as clearly and openly as I could my feeling that the war in Vietnam is a political disaster which the President is not responsible for, and which in no circumstances should he allow himself to be labelled with.

I was surprised at two reactions in the room. First, there seemed a number of people who quite clearly feel the American public is behind the war. Still. Second, there were at least a few persons who seem to think the war is some kind of Presidential prerogative which we must not allow college boys or effeminate professors to infringe.

God have mercy on us if this mood prevails. I enclose The Boston Globe account of the Harrington Saltonstall race:

The victory of Michael Harrington was a victory for the new politics and for the opponents of the war in Vietnam.

And it was a serious defeat for Richard Nixon and his policies in Southeast Asia.

Healy is no friend of the war. But he is not an enemy of the President. I have known him for years and regard him as one of the dozen best

political reporters in the country.

Time is running out. At least I think so.

This is a personal note, but if you think it sensible, you might show it to John Ehrlichman.

Daniel P. Moynihan

DPM/ec