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July 13, 2023

“Of all the dumb bunnies – he
is the worst.” Truman & His
Personal Opinions with
Personal Friends

Truman as President



Robert Taft



United States Senator from Ohio,
1939-1953

Oldest son of President William Howard
Taft

Unsuccessfully sought the Republican
Party presidential nomination in 1940,
1948, and 1952



Letter to Bess, June 26, 1946

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July June 26, 1946.

Dear Bess: - You see I am getting ahead of the calendar. Thinking about the terrible O.P.A. Bill the House and Senate Republicans put over on the country. Our Congressional Democrats are tired and asleep most of the time and the legislation we are getting is not so good.

Taft has maneuvered this price thing around so as to come as near as possible to ruin hoping I won't have sense enough to know what to do. The bill they have given us

“Taft has maneuvered this price thing around so as to come as near as possible to ruin hoping I won’t have sense enough to know what to do.”

Letter to Mary Jane, April 5, 1947

“The Atomic Energy Commission fight finally came to a test vote. Mr. Taft has succeeded in making a real fool of himself as have several other so called leading Republicans. I am of the opinion that the country has had about enough of their pin head antics.”

lot of school boys or men make
They have been piddling around
now for 90 days and have sent
favor five little bills affecting
special things like extension of
war powers in certain things and
some special things for special sec-
tions of the country. But for real
policy legislation - nothing.
The Atomic Energy Commission
fight finally came to a test vote.
Mr. Taft has succeeded in making
a real fool of himself as have

Letter to Mary Jane, June 28, 1947

Mrs. M. J. C.
 THE WHITE HOUSE
 WASHINGTON
 June 28, 1947
 Dear Mary: I am enclosing your check. If you run short of funds let me know and I'll take care of the situation.
 I was very glad you called me today. I had expected to call you tonight. The situation here is very bad. I am afraid the Taft-Hartley Law will not work. But I'll be charged with the responsibility whether it does or does not work. I've come to the conclusion that Taft is no good and Hartley is worse.
 Mr. Norton will be chairman of the House

“I am afraid the Taft-Hartley Law will not work. But I’ll be charged with the responsibility whether it does or does not work. I’ve come to the conclusion that Taft is no good and Hartley is worse.”

Letter to Ethel Noland, July 11, 1952

“It looks very much like my candidate for the Republican nomination has beaten himself. Of all the dumb bunnies - he is the worst. Son of a President & Chief Justice...three times a candidate for President and look what he's done to himself.”

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

July 11th 1952

Dear Ethel:- I was most happy to have yours of July 6th. The enclosure gave me quite a kick. "There's Nothing Like Co. Hines." Well, maybe there isn't!

It looks very much like my candidate for the Republican nomination has beaten himself. Of all the dumb bunnies - he is the worst. Son of a President and a Chief Justice, in the Ohio Legislature, U.S. Senator, three times candidate for President - and look what he's done to himself. When a fellow is not so great intellectually, what can we expect.

I'm sure, sorry that Nellie has had to go back to the hospital. What a bunch of nothings they are! Why can anyone be against my health program? We'd be able to meet situations such as Nellie's if we had it.

Conscientious Objectors





Letter to Mary Jane, 12-22-1946

of 'em are just plain cowards and
slackers. They want me to let some
3000 of 'em out of jail for Christmas.
If I could bring back the 300,000 who
were killed and the 400,000 who were
wounded could be made well at the
same time I might do it.
Hope you are both well. It is
mighty lonesome here.
Lots of love to you both
Harry.

“The White House is being picketed this morning by a bunch of conscientious objectors. I don’t like ‘em. Most of ‘em are just cowards and slackers. They want me to let some 3000 of ‘em out of jail for Christmas. If I could bring back the 300,000 who were killed...I might do it.”

Letter to Bess, December 22, 1946

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Sunday, Dec. 22, 1946.

Dear Bess: - I am in your office
writing this. I told Margie (your pen name)
in the note I just finished to say that
Conscientious objectors were marching
up and down in front of the White House
with prison stripes on and carrying
signs on which, I suppose for I haven't
been able to read them, they ask for the
release of their comrades in jail.
Well damn few of them are honest.
If the country from Revolutionary times
on had had only conscientious objectors
where would we be? In the late Civil
War we would be under the heel

"I told Margie...in the note I just finished to her that 'conscientious' objectors were marching up & down in front of the White House with prison stripes on & carrying signs on which...they ask for the release of their comrades from jail. Well damn few of them are honest."

Letter to Bess, December 22, 1946

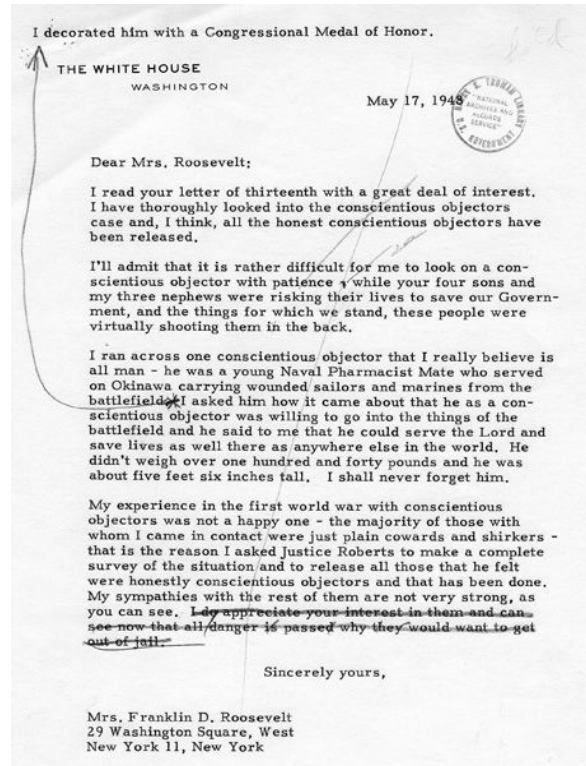
of Japan or Hitler. Neither prospect is pleasant to contemplate.

The only one of 'em I ever came in contact with, whom I thought to be on the level was the little skinny pharmacist's mate to whom I gave the Congressional Medal of Honor out in the back yard of the White House. He'd carried wounded men after wounded men to safety from under fire at the front and finally was shot himself and still kept working on the other wounded. He said he thought he could serve the Lord acceptably under fire if he himself didn't try to kill anybody. He did his heroic job on Okinawa. Was sure glad to talk to you just now.

“The only one of ‘em I ever came in contact with, whom I thought to be on the level, was the little skinny pharmacist’s mate to whom I gave the Congressional Medal of Honor.... He said he thought he could serve the Lord acceptably under fire if he himself didn’t try to kill anybody.”

Draft Letter to Eleanor Roosevelt

“I’ll admit that it is rather difficult for me to look on a conscientious objector with patience while your four sons and my three nephews were risking their lives to save our Government, and...these people were virtually shooting them in the back.”



General Douglas MacArthur



General of the Army

Supreme Commander of the Allied
Powers in the Far East, 1945-1951

Commander of the United Nations
Command, July 1950-April 1951

Longhand Note, 6-17-1945

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Japanese War and the relations with China, Russia, and Britain with regard to it; Supreme Commander and what to do with Mr. Pinna Donna Brass Hat, Five Star Mr. Arthur. He's worse than the Cabots and the Lodges - they at least talked with one another before they told God what to do. Mr. tells God right off. It is a very great pity we have to have stuffed shirts like that in key positions. I hope to see why in Hell Roosevelt didn't order Wainwright home and

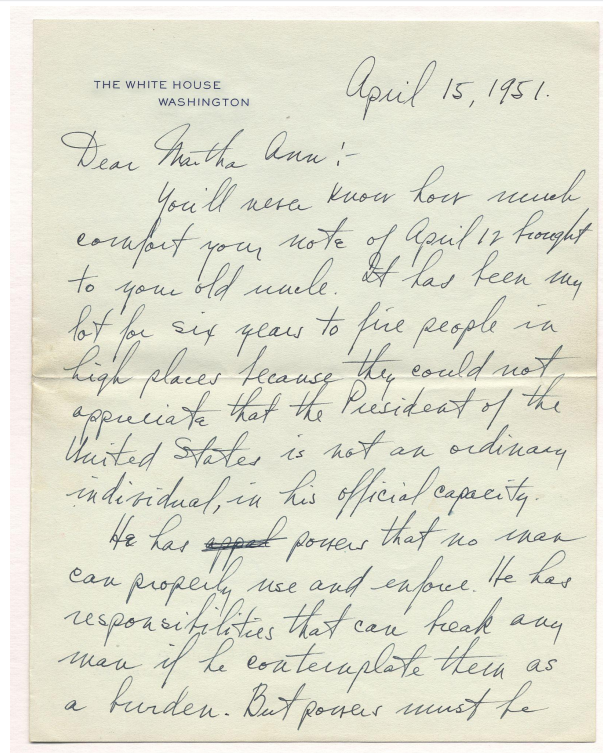
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

let Mr. Arthur be a martyr. Guess he was afraid of the Satrape Pres - Mr. Corwin - Patterson Axis. We'd have had a real General and a fighting man if we had Wainwright and not a play actor and a funny man such as we have now.

Don't you know a country can produce such men as Robert E. Lee, John J. Pershing, Eisenhower, Bradley and at the same time produce Custers, Pattons and Mr. Arthurs.

Letter to Martha A. Truman, 4-15-52

“You’ll never know how much comfort your note of April 12 brought to your old uncle. It has been my lot for six years to fire people in high places because they could not appreciate that the President of the United States is not an ordinary individual, in his official capacity.”



Labor Unions



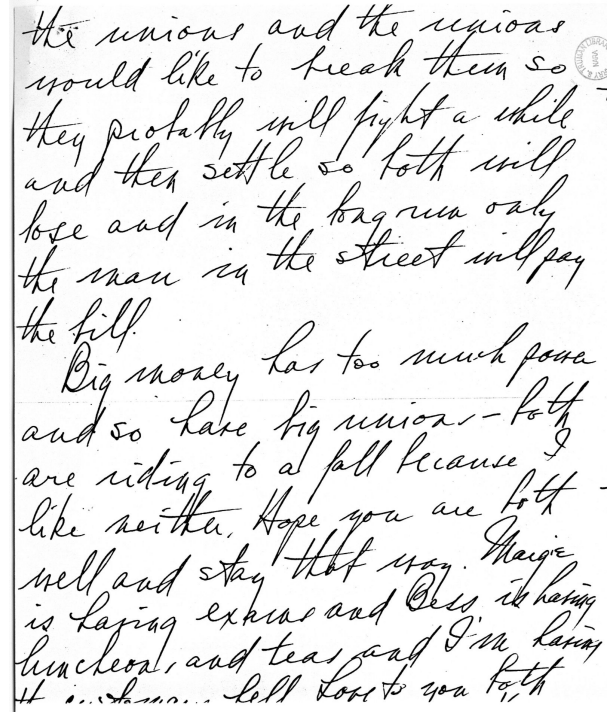
Letter to Mary Jane, 1-23-1946

settlement. The steel strike is
the worst. We can handle most
of the others. People are somewhat
befuddled and want to take time
out to get a nerve rest. Some
want a life guarantee of rest
at government expense and some
I'm sorry to say just want to
raise hell and hamper the re-
turn to peacetime production
hoping to obtain some political
advantage.
The steel people and General Motors
I am sure would like to keep

“The steel strike is the worst. We can handle most of the others...Some want a life guarantee of rest at government expense and some I’m sorry to say just want to raise hell & hamper the return to peacetime production hoping to obtain some political advantage.”

Letter to Mary Jane, 1-23-1946

“The steel people and General Motors I am sure would like to break the unions and the unions would like to break them so they will probably fight a while and then settle so both will lose and in the long run only the man in the street will pay the bill. Big money has too much power & so have big unions....”



the unions and the unions
would like to break them so
they probably will fight a while
and then settle so both will
lose and in the long run only
the man in the street will pay
the bill.
Big money has too much power
and so have big unions - both
are riding to a fall because I
like neither. Hope you are both
well and stay that way. Marie
is having exams and Bill is having
hunches, and teas and I'm having
it all. Love to you both



Longhand Note, circa 1945

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Call in Phil Murray
William Green
Carpenters Hutchison
Dan Tolin Teamsters Union
R. J. Thomas.
Longshoremen
Sidney Hillman
S. O. B. of Musicians.
and some others. Tell
them that patience is ex-
hausted. Declare an
emergency - call out
troops. Start industry

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

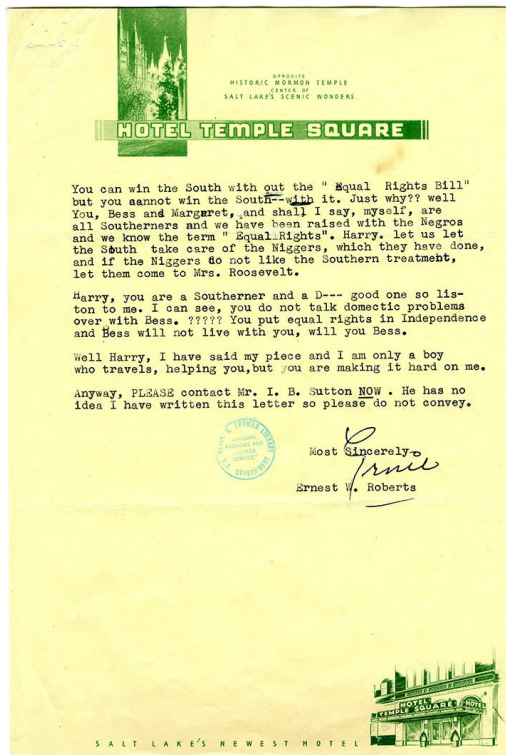
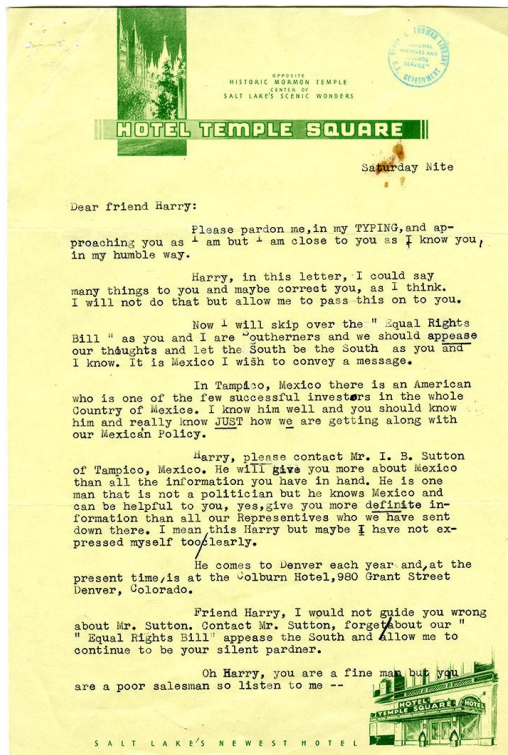
and put anyone to work
who wants to go to work.
If any leader interferes
court martial him.
Lenin ought to have been
shot in 1942, but
Franklin didn't have the
guys to do it.
Pass Call-Burton. Hold
Bill. Adjourn Congress
and run the country.
Get plenty of Atomic
Bombs on hand - drop one
on Stalin. Put the United

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Civil Rights

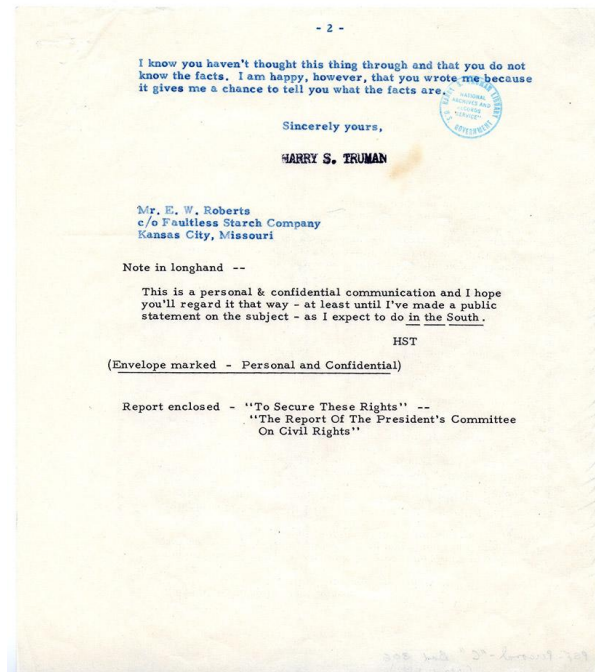
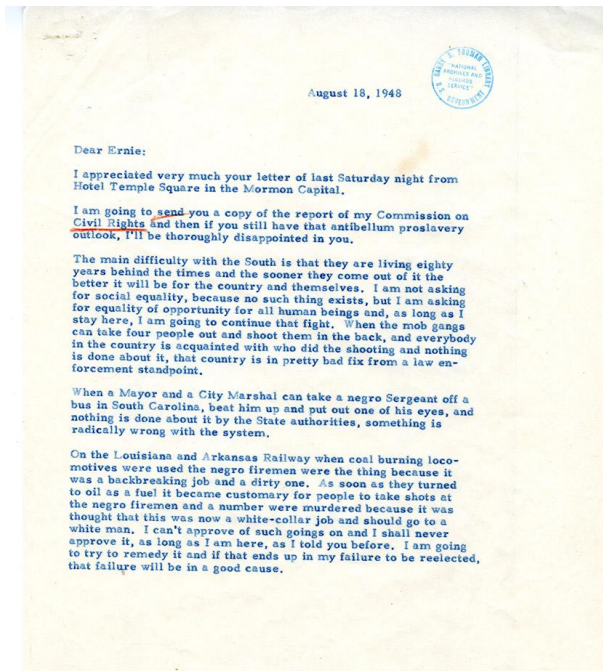


Letter from Ernie Roberts





Reply to Roberts from Truman



Letter to Mary Jane, July 25, 1947

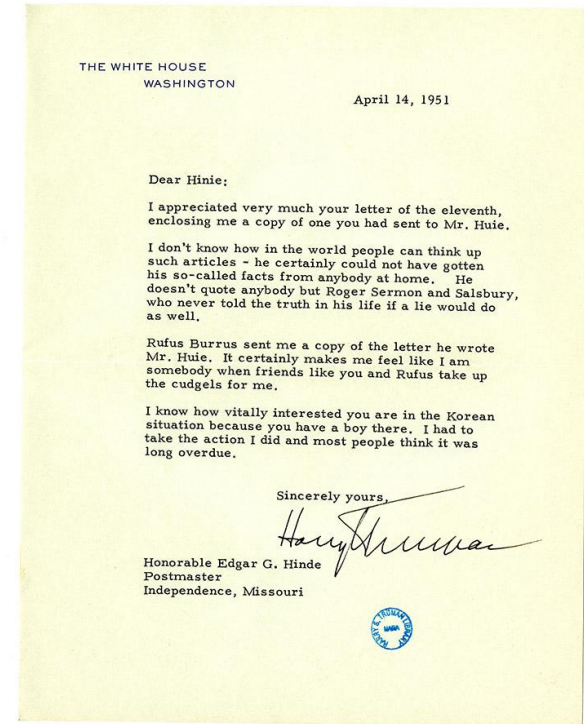
and Mrs. Kester there. Evidently it was curtain washing time all around. Best wrote me the same day you did that she and Vieta were washing all the curtains at the old house in Independence.

The Congress, the Post-Dispatch and the Star seem to be having spasms over the K. C. vote situation. I am reliably informed that as many Republicans as Democrats are expected to end up in the jug before it's all over. All I hope is that they get that fat no good can of lard named Roberts of the Star. They may do it too.

“The Congress, the Post-Dispatch, and the Star seem to having spasms over the K. C. vote situation....All I hope is that they get that fat no good can of lard named Roberts of the Star.”

Letter to Edgar Hinde, 4-14-1951

“I don’t know how in the world people can think up such articles - he certainly could not have gotten his so-called facts from anybody at home. He doesn’t quote anybody but Roger Sermon and Salsbury, who never told the truth in his life if a lie would do as well.”



Letter to Nellie Noland, 9-26-1952

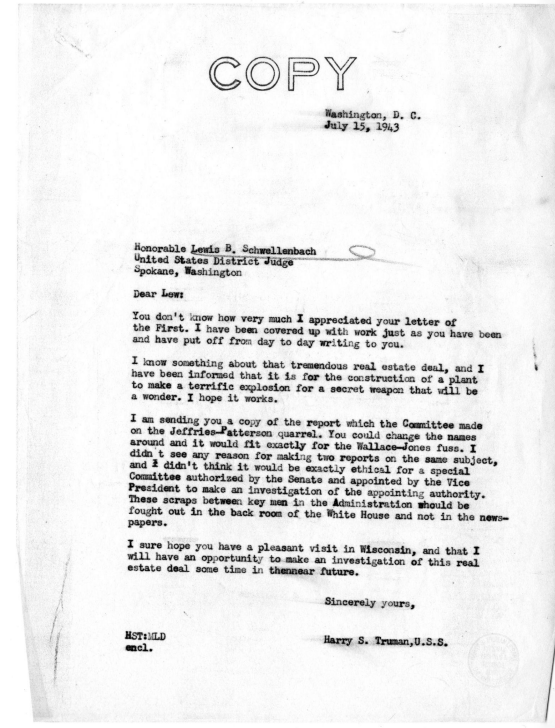
He was robbing his partner. Both were being raised by an old cow that gave enough milk for two calves. Pithballs are alike be they cats, pigs or men.

I am starting on a campaign tour but without much enthusiasm. My own candidate has charged me with a "mess" in Washington and now turns out to have secret political funds up his sleeve. He has taken up with McCarthy and Jenner the proponents of the Big Lie and has himself completely distorted the truth on Korea, R. I. Stokes and the European Foreign Policy. He has also discriminated against our Missouri Senator. If he takes McCarthy and Jenner to his bosom along with Nixon he surely ought not to discriminate against our counterpart.

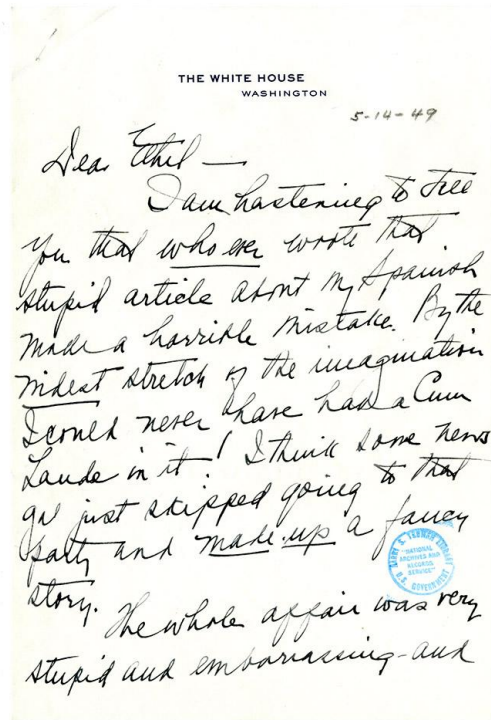
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Lewis Schwellenbach, July 1943

“I know something about that tremendous real estate deal, and I have been informed that it is for the construction of a plant to make a terrific explosion for a secret weapon that will be a wonder.”



Letter to Ethel Noland, May 1949



“I am hastening to tell you that who
ever wrote that stupid article about my
Spanish made a horrible mistake. By
the widest stretch of the imagination I
could never have a Cum Laude in it! I
think some news gal skipped going to
that party and made up a fancy story.”

Thanks!

Questions/comments:

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gov](mailto:tammy.williams@nara.gov)

