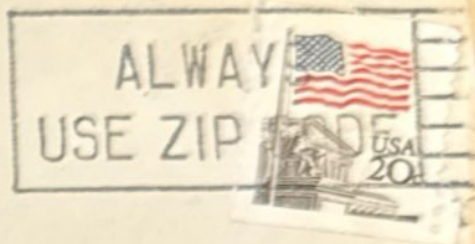


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To: Professor Capps  
1724 Santa Barbara Street  
Santa Barbara, Ca

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Dear Professor Capps,

Greetings! Before I leave for the East I wanted to get in touch with you. I would like to thank you for giving me and my fellow peers so much in the way of an education. In order to discover answers one must first begin to go beyond the realm of accepting the "moral" route and start raising questions. If I have gotten anything out of my 4 years at UCSB, it has been this.

Currently, I'm spending my summer on campus working for the Alumni Vacation Center. It is a perfect job for me over the summertime as it allows free time to read and study certain topics that I did not have time to do during the school term. One subject is examining the evolution of American liberalism. Also too, I have been avidly reading everything I can find on the Kennedy administration. What an exciting time that must have been. Those early years of the 1960's exemplified young professionals bent on creatively searching for solutions to America's pressing problems. If only the cruelty of that day could have been avoided when America saw its hopes die in the aftermath of the assassination. And then to have that same fate befall his brother is doubly heinous. So much has been lost.

But, being the optimist, I have a profound belief that the human condition can be radically improved. Right now I feel placed in a minority. When I went to Washington in April it appeared to me that conservatism was on the upswing - not only among older people but also with people my age who are venturing out into the job market. This only serves to instill in me the importance of working as hard as I can for liberal causes; so much to be done with nat'l medicare, equal rights and environmental protection. After all, if I don't fight for these concerns, who will?

So, this is what is passing through my mind. I realize that there will probably be much frustration along the way. But what do I have to lose, certainly not my integrity? Thus far, a few

things have panned out for me to get me started. I just found out that I was appointed as a fellow for the Center for the Study of the Presidency. The time commitment is minimal and it isn't a paid position but there are benefits which go along with it such as the opportunity to publish in the Presidential Studies Quarterly journal. Also, they are flying me to Denver in the latter part of October to attend a conference in which Carter and Ford are chairing. That should prove to be enlightening. In return, I must write a major research paper on some aspect of the Presidency. I'm starting to search for a topic right now.

Come September 4<sup>th</sup>, I'm driving back to Washington in search of a job. The locus of activity is, I believe, in the capital city. Needless to say, I am thrilled (and a bit unnerved) to do all of this. How exciting to be at this stage in my life when I can pack up my bags and go wherever my footsteps take me. I can hardly wait to explore the galleries and museums. I am fascinated by history, we can learn so much from it.

Anyway, I have enclosed a couple of things which I have written this summer which I'd like you to have. If possible I would like to see you and say goodbye before I leave.

Thanks again, you can't possibly realize how much you have given me.

- Beth

Political legitimacy. Why is government so necessary? Is it because society is so diverse that each particular group within the larger whole has neither the will nor the necessary resources to attain common goals? If, indeed this is believed to be the case, then government exists to direct the populace towards moral ends. Wasn't it after all, Plato and Aristotle who assumed that government was necessary for people to realize their highest potentialities? No distinction was made between the political and the social. The polis, an organized political community, was encouraged and served these early Grecians well.

This positive interpretation of the modern state was disputed by James Madison. Writing more towards the end of the 18th century, this classical liberal theorist stressed the negative and limited function of modern government. Madison, in the Hegelian tradition, recognized that individuals have difficulty in transcending their limited self-interests. Economic interest groups, or what he called "Factions" operated solely in pursuit of their own interests -- those being primarily greater wealth, power, and status for themselves. And what is to be governments role in all of this? According to him, government existed neither to destroy nor transcend these self-engrossed factions, but rather, to regulate the group struggle. "If men were angels, no government would be necessary." (Fed.Paper#10)

So where do we stand right now? Because human beings are not angels, we can't rely as did Plato and Aristotle, on moralistic statesmen whose enlightened motives cause them to attain justice:

"Two world wars and a major depression have advanced bureaucaracy and its inherent regimentations to a point where the ideology of equality becomes more and more a means of rationalizing these regimentations and less and less a force serving individual life or liberty."  
-Robert Nisbet

In this highly technocratic age, moralistic sentiments are cast aside and are replaced by rudimentary impersonalized computer lingo. But what about James Madison? When interest and ambition check each other, doesn't an enlightened political conscience become wholly unnecessary? For him, a system of separation of powers would secure the desirable balance between the countermingling forces of anarchy and tyranny. In the former, anarchy results when several powerful self-interested factions oppress the weaker social strata while in the latter, tyranny surfaces if all government power becomes concentrated in the same individuals. Clearly, Madison believed that the republican system which he devised for the 1787 constitutional convention would avert both tyranny and anarchy. Why? Simply because the system provided for the accommodation of diverse interests. Within the larger society, the multiplicity of interests would secure freedom. For over two centuries this Madisonian doctrine has served this country in its stead. But no longer is this working quite as smoothly.

Ethnic groups have learned to market their uniqueness. Instead of trying to formulate a unified America based on liberty and justice for all -- a land of togetherness -- we are, rather, seeing an explosion of group conflicts hellbent on attaining their particular needs. The melting pot metaphor can no longer be used. Outer society is in chaos. The divisions of people based on income level is widening with alarming fervor. Unequal distribution of income is inherently a leader to an unequal distribution of freedom. It is thought that government interfaces with society in order to secure freedom. But this is not happening. Instead, government seems to be the instigator to much of the

discord and unrest in society. All in search for the common good. And what, pray tell, is the common good?

The main problem in the attempt of interpreting government lies in the difficulty of distinguishing the purposes underlying its existence. Examine the leadership which charts the course for the particular administration. No two governmental leaders are the same, each pursuing a wide variety of goals. Some maintain an attitude of attaining shining civic virtue and calm social order. Others have seemingly aimed at maintaining the economic divisions in the social strata. Which goals ought to take priority as uniquely meeting governmental ends? That answer decides if one is a conservative or a liberal American.

A beautiful crystal-clear dusk as lazy hues of lavender and oranges streak across the sky. The sun has begun its descent as it sinks slowly over the coastal mountains. The boats docked in the harbor creak and groan in rhythm to the crashing surf. Seagulls screechingly signal the impending darkness as they hungrily eye the fishermen's catch. These local men (and one woman) tiredly clamber out of their boats as they end yet another day at sea. The serenity of this place is disturbed by an eerie whisper of a harmonica being played by a wino who is tucked away in some dark hidden corner. Does this bring back any familiar memories? Yes, this is Santa Barbara in the summertime.

Such beauty. It takes my breath away as I gaze out over this paradise which I have called my home for the past four years. I will certainly miss this place. But, deep-down inside me I know that it is time to move on. A radical change is desired. In many ways I consider Santa Barbara as being a rather shallow place; one in which fails to represent the human condition. This city breeds and encourages a certain class of people. The failure to foster diversity leads to stagnation. People first become accustomed to, and then demand their own particular wants and needs. The result: conservatism sets in.

Enough is enough. I seek change. Hopefully my search will not be futile if I go back to Washington D.C. So many college graduates leave the University with high hopes and aspirations. But, as they enter the job market and begin to make compromises in order to achieve a successful livelihood (one in which their parents can boast to their friends about at cocktail parties), their American dreams become forgotten. Perhaps this phenomenon can be appropriately termed "survival in the fast lane." Life becomes filled with demands and pressures which causes estrangement. Out of this comes despair which leads to indifference. And thus, these young people who were so desperately anxious to make a concerted effort to alter conditions that they were so adamantly opposed to, begin to fade into the blandless woodwork of society. In the face of imposing institutions of power they have become no different from the majority of their generation and generations before them. Integration into the system is what it is called.

I shudder to think of this happening to me. It won't if I have anything to say about it. Admittedly, I am dissatisfied with the direction of American society. In various debates I have repeatedly vented my frustrations with this supposed land of opportunity. When unemployment is 10% amongst whites and a staggering 20% amongst blacks, something must not be clicking. So much is not equal, so much of our hopes are dependent upon lawmakers who are entangled in bureaucratic red-tape.

As such, activism is vital. We should search out reasons for our despair and demand answers to our pressing domestic and international problems. It seems to me that oftentimes one may find that the sharpest criticism about our government and its elected officials will correspondingly follow with the deepest sense of idealism and love for our democratically colored flag of freedom. There is nothing wrong with questioning the accepted status quo.