



All of these individuals are the ones that help the Head in reaching a common sense, average solution. They are alert for the phony argument and the selfish motive and the untrustworthy individual. They help to meet the deficiencies of a faulty memory, a deteriorating disposition, and any tendency toward the pessimistic or the morbid.

The point of this recitation is that even the matter of reaching a common sense solution -- or making an average decision -- is not one that can be performed by an individual operating alone.

I was interested in a statement of yours in which you express your satisfaction that "at last you are ready to crack down on McCarthy." Now I have no doubt that you are correct in the later statement in the same paragraph where you say, "I have always known that you feel about him much as I do." At the same time, I must say that I am not quite certain as to the meaning of your first expression. Again referring to the special significance or, let us say, the popular standing of the Presidency, it is quite clear that whenever the President takes part in a newspaper trial of some individual of whom he disapproves, one thing is automatically accomplished. This is an increase in the headline value of the individual attacked.

I think that the average honorable individual cannot understand to what lengths certain politicians would go for publicity. They have learned a simple truth in American life. This is that the most vicious kind of attack from one element always creates a very great popularity, amounting to almost hero worship, in an opposite fringe of society. Because of this, as you well know, Huey Long



had his idolaters. Every attack on him increased their number (an expression of the under-dog complex) and enhanced the fervor of his avowed supporters.

When you have a situation like this, you have an ideal one for the newspapers, the television and the radio, to exploit, to exaggerate and to perpetuate. In such a situation I disagree completely with the "crack down" theory. I believe in the positive approach. I believe that we should earnestly support the practice of American principles in trials and investigations -- we should teach and preach decency and justice. We should support -- even militantly support -- people whom we know to be unjustly attacked, whether they are public servants or private citizens. In this case, of course, it is necessary to be certain of facts if the defense is to be a personal one. Of course, the indirect defense accomplished through condemnation of unfair methods is always applicable.

Persistence in these unspectacular but sound methods will, in my opinion, produce results that may not be headlined, but they will be permanent because they will earn the respect of fair-minded citizens -- which means the vast bulk of our population. To give way in anger or irritation to an outburst intended to excoriate some individual, his motives and his methods, could do far more to destroy the position and authority of the attacker than it would do to damage the attacked.

Of course, it is really useless to tell you all these things. You are well aware of them. But it is always easy to grow verbose when I write to you.

The part of your letter that talked about some of the "pap" being written about me gave me quite a smile for the simple reason that I rarely, if ever, read any of these things.